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[By PAUL MATWYCHUK • 13]

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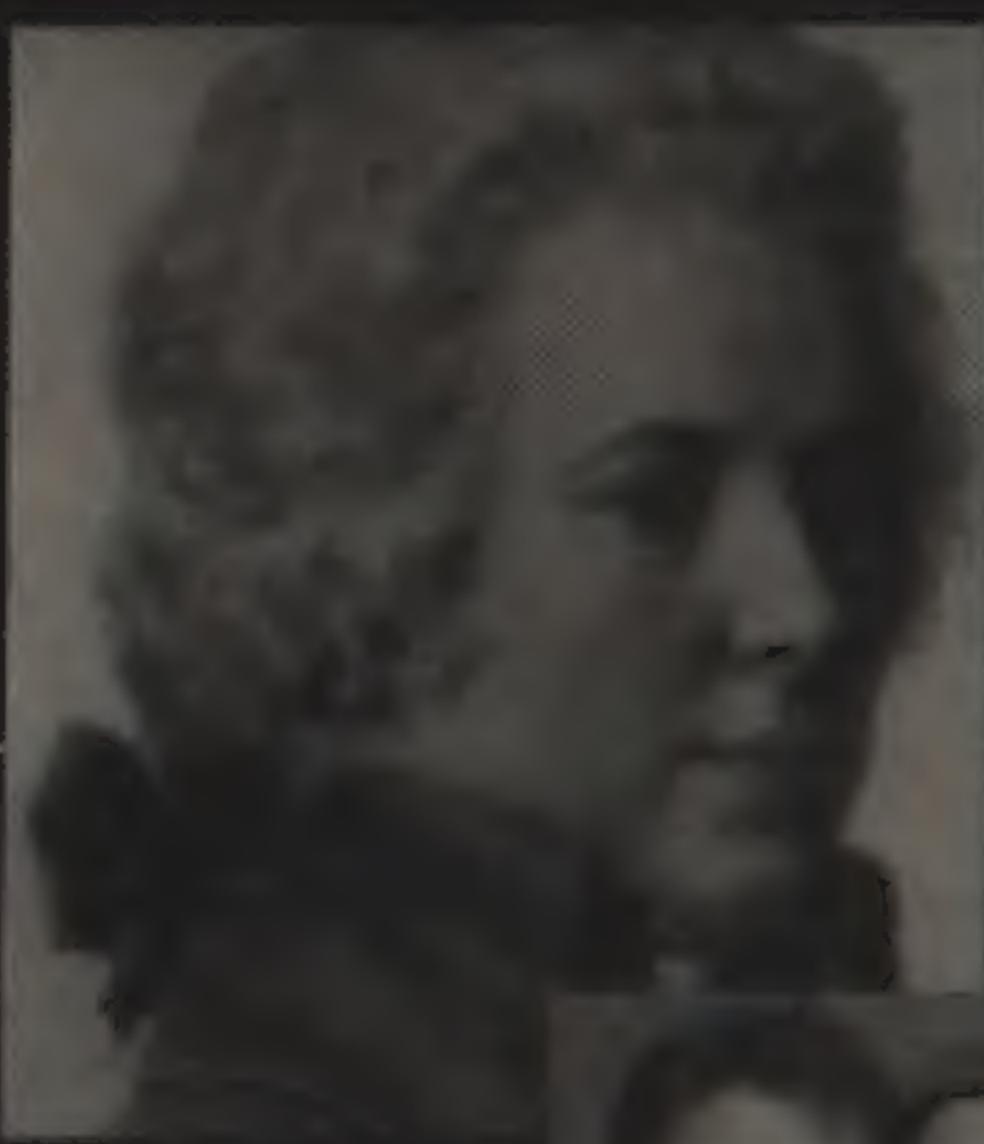
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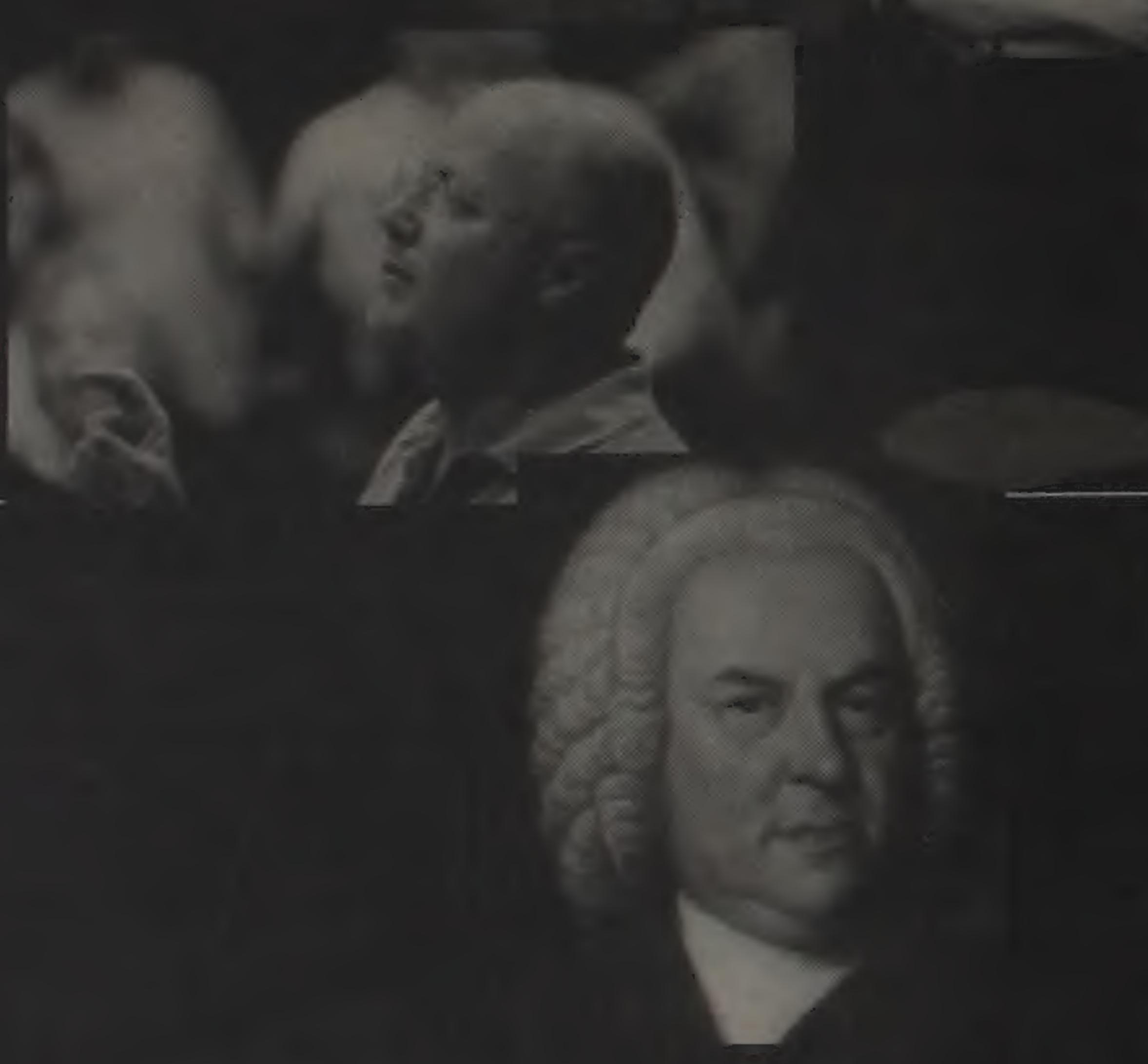
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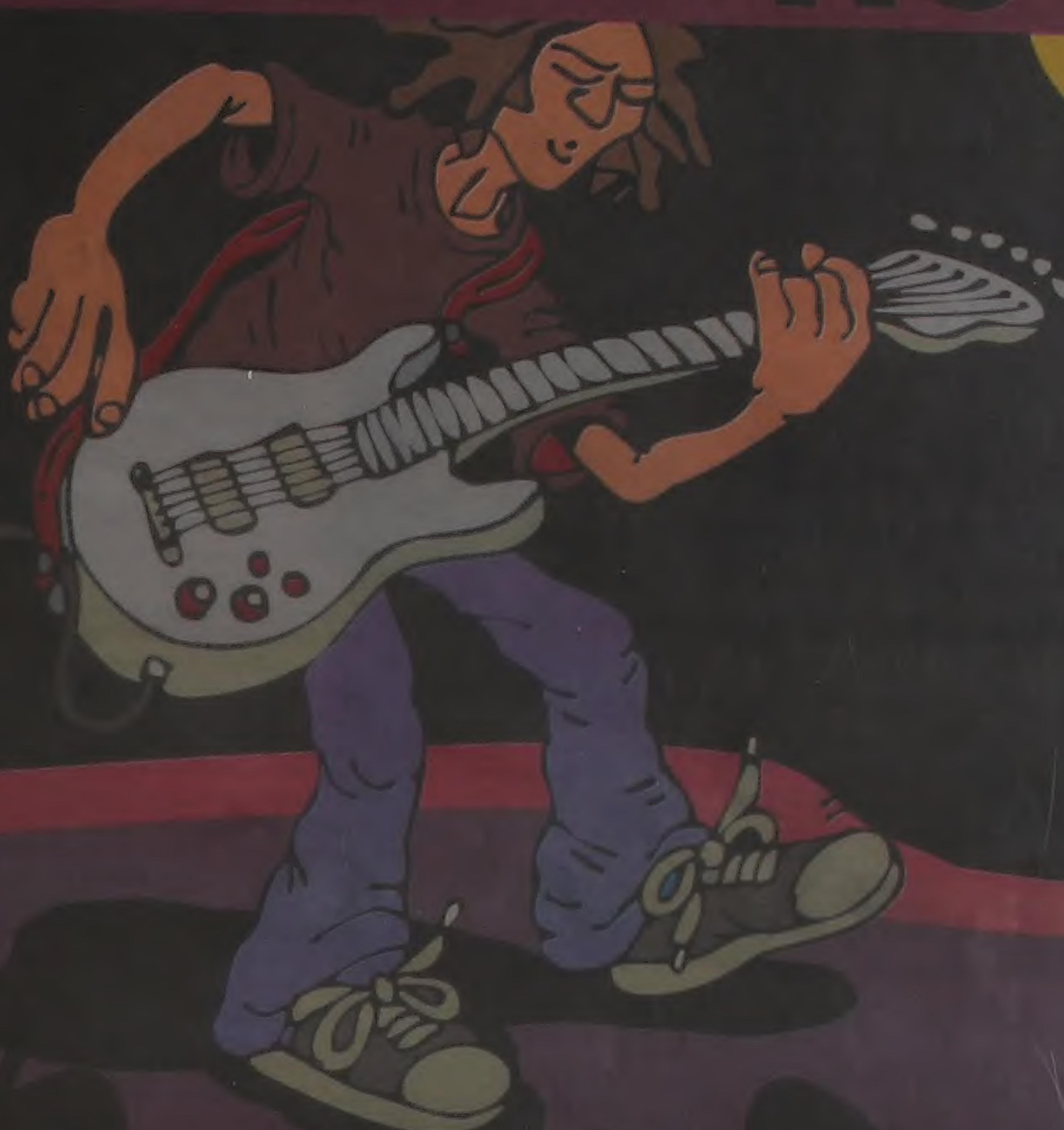
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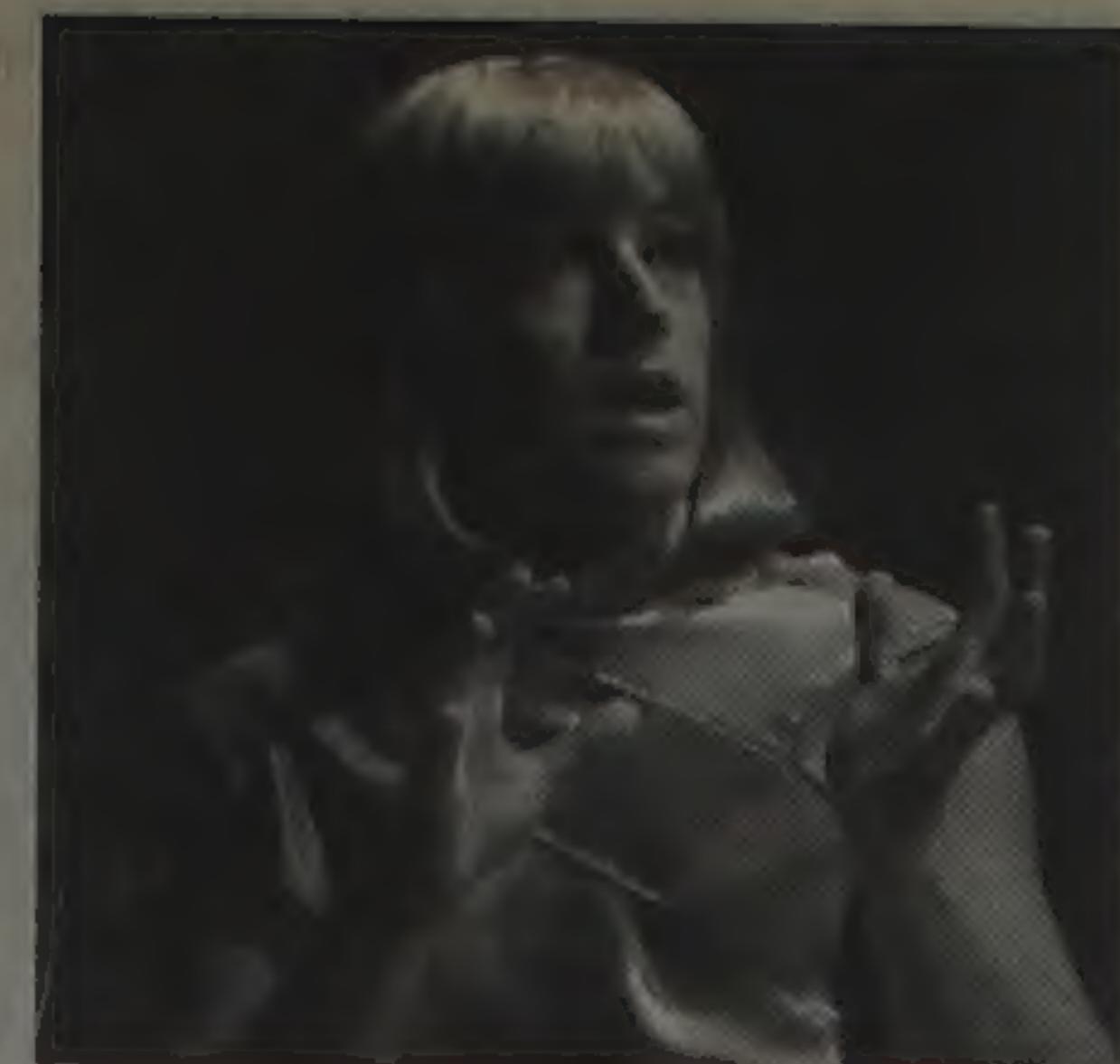
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ON THE COVER

Actor/playwright Russell Barr says he's got a sick sense of humour, and he's probably not kidding, seeing as in *Sisters, Such Devoted Sisters*, his alter-ego Bernice Hindley comes out about being a Glaswegian drag queen who likes to make pigeons explode • 13



FRONT

Edmonton Centre: Vue shines a light on one of Canada's tightest races • 7



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Bramwell Park: come on, feel the folk • 38



three dollar bill

BY RICHARD BURNETT

X marks the spot

I have to hand it to Stephen Harper: Just when I thought the battle for full gay and lesbian civil rights in Canada was pretty much a done deal, the political swine stood up and gave us the fucking finger. If Harper and his cronies are elected on January 23, the first order of business will be a parliamentary vote to repeal same-sex marriage. And whether that vote passes or not depends largely on whether the Tories win a large minority or majority government.

Fearing four years of socially conser-

vative Stephen Harper as PM—a job the Toronto-born (!) MP for Calgary Southwest covets like King David did Bathsheba—I called up my friend Bruce Hicks, the Montreal political scientist who co-authored with Jerome Black a 2004 survey of 1,307 candidates running for the Bloc Quebecois, Conservative, Green, Liberal and NDP parties. The survey has a 44-per-cent response rate and reports only 20 per cent of Conservative candidates supported SSM. The Tories were the only party where a majority of the candidates were against gay marriage.

"The one thing Harper has been clear on is he will hold a free vote immediately after the election," Bruce told me this week. "It's as big a numbers game as whether or not he will win a majority government. Right now the numbers show he's on the cusp of a majority that would bring him pretty close to the numbers he needs to defeat SSM."

But Canadian Press parliamentary correspondent Sylvain Larocque—who wrote the recently-published book *Marriage gay: Les coulisses d'une révolution sociale* (Flammarion Quebec), a ter-

rific chronicle of the decade-long legal battle for SSM in Canada that will be published in English by Lorimer Books this May—thinks Harper can't drag this out if he wants to hang onto power.

"It is certain if elected the Conservatives will hold a free vote on SSM but I think they will lose it," Larocque told me over his cellphone during a Paul Martin campaign stop. "But if it passes, they will need to debate the notwithstanding clause, and that will [also] be debated in the senate, which supported SSM last time."

Hicks says the Supreme Court would—as most legal scholars in Canada predict—strike down an anti-SSM vote as unconstitutional, setting the stage for an even more fractious parliamentary vote on who has the final say, Parliament or the courts. Now, if you thought Canadians were initially divided over SSM, just wait until Parliament debates the notwithstanding clause. It will make Quebec's use of the clause in 1989 enshrining Quebec's Bill 101 language law look like a mere skirmish. (The Quebec provincial Liberal govern-

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ment of Robert Bourassa rewrote Bill 101 in 1993 before the notwithstanding clause's five-year expiry date.)

"Harper—surrounded by people who argue he should invoke the notwithstanding clause—is being very clever in this campaign," Hicks points out. "His pronouncements on the notwithstanding clause are simply to not use it on the first vote. A lot of time and money went into fighting for SSM, and if the battle is opened up again—and it is large [social conservative] American groups that are funding this battle—it is unfair to have gay couples fight this again."

In fact, not only did Harper address a March 31, 2005, B.C. fundraising dinner for the far-right Canadian Alliance for Social Justice and Family Values Association, which advocates against SSM and abortion, but Conservative Justice Critic Vic Toews received an achievement award from the group. Toews even praised the Canadian Alliance in the House of Commons, saying, "Canadians across the country are grateful for its efforts." Also, the *Halifax Chronicle Herald* reports the Conservative Party has warned two Halifax-area candidates they better not discuss their meeting with clergy who oppose SSM.

Which brings us back to election day this January 23. Last week, *Toronto Star* columnist Chantal Hebert opined, "When it comes to the equality of gay Canadians, Paul Martin, like Jean Chrétien before him, has been content to leave the matter to the individual conscience of his members. Now, in the dying days of an election campaign, he is going a step further by basically asking voters to re-elect his [own] social conservative MPs to protect some of the very minorities whose rights they have systematically opposed for the better part of a decade."

"Harper is against SSM but he so wants to be in power that if he wins a minority government, he will tell [his MPs], 'I went as far as I could,'" Larocque says. "Harper has no taste to drag this issue out. Power is his goal."

That is what gay and lesbian voters, as well as their straight friends and families, must remember at the ballot box next week. Vote strategically. Because if the Tories end up with a majority government, the first thing to go will be same-sex marriage. ☐



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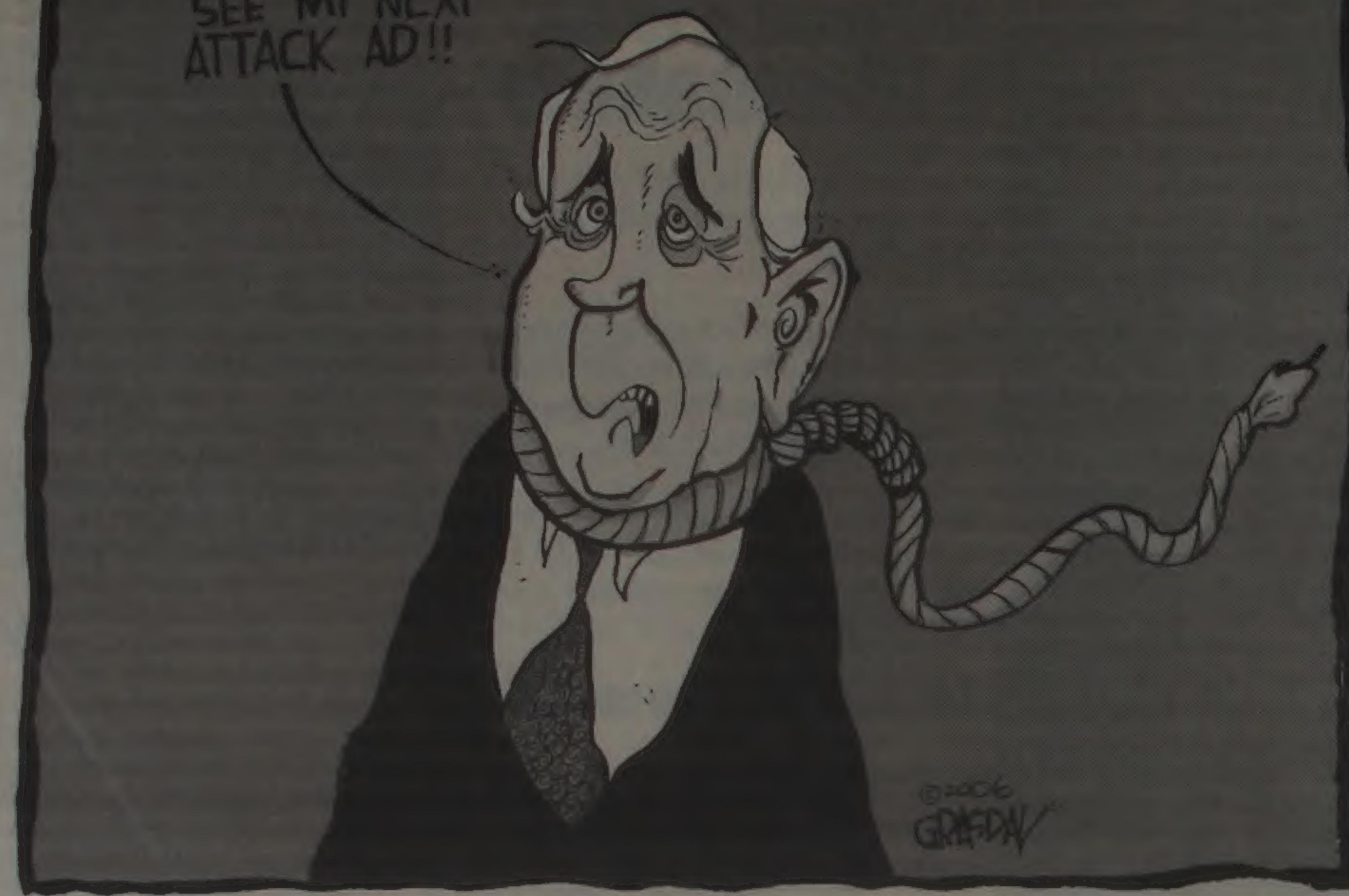
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news roundup

By CHRIS BOUTET

ALBERTA: BLAMELESS!

Less than a week after the Alberta government quietly agreed to settle out-of-court on a class-action lawsuit filed by thousands of people who were shortchanged by the province's welfare system, provincial cabinet minister Mike Cardinal came forward Monday to state there was nothing mean-spirited about the welfare policy and had the suit gone to trial, the government would have been found blameless.

The lawsuit, filed two years ago, claimed the province underpaid or illegally clawed back money from welfare recipients, severely handicapped Albertans and people receiving widow's pensions. Though the policies were changed last year, thousands of Albertans who received welfare payments from 1979 to 2004 are entitled to their piece of the pie. According to a report from the Canadian Press, the minister of human resources and employment refused to assign blame for the actions that led to the \$100 million settlement.

"I don't think there was any deliberate wrongdoing to hurt anybody," said Cardinal in an interview with CP. "I think the policies would be defensible. We could have defended them, but it could have dragged on five years."

NAFTA: UNFAIR!

Not content to sit idly back and let the Canadian government have all the fun

complaining about NAFTA, the U.S. lumber industry filed court papers on Tuesday accusing Canada of unfairly subsidizing exports to the States and contending that the North American trade pact violates the U.S. Constitution.

According to a report from Reuters, the Coalition for Fair Lumber Imports bases its claims on the supposition that the North American Free Trade Agreement's dispute settlement process, called Chapter 19, makes findings appealable only to panels of individuals, some of whom are not U.S. citizens and therefore not accountable within the U.S. government.

Canada ships about \$6 billion in softwood lumber to the United States each year, and the trade has long been a point of contention between the two countries, with Washington claiming Canada subsidizes its lumber industry by charging unreasonably low rates to log in public forests. Ottawa, meanwhile, denies engaging in such practices and accuses the States of being protectionist.

In a press release issued Tuesday, the Coalition said its suit, filed to a federal appeals court in Washington, D.C., demonstrated how U.S. companies are being deprived of their right to due process by a NAFTA system which allows panels including Canadians appointed by the Canadian government to decide on issues under U.S. law affecting U.S. companies.

Lawyers assigned to the case state that no date has been set for the hearing.

CITIES: NEED MONEY!

In light of the sheer amount of surplus money being launched out of a cannon at the Alberta economy by the oil industry, Calgary Mayor Dave Bronconnier announced during his state of the city address on Tuesday that he expects the province and its cash-strapped municipalities will reach an

agreement for more money for cities by as early as this spring.

According to the CBC, Bronconnier is meeting with Municipal Affairs Minister Rob Renner this Friday, where he plans to make it clear that Calgary cannot continue to increase property taxes to pay for its sprawling developments, especially when so much of that money goes directly into provincial coffers as an education tax. If the city was able to keep a portion of that tax, Bronconnier plans to reduce the amount taxpayers have to contribute to maintain city services.

Calgary's mayor, along with pretty much every other publicly funded organization in the province, has long been pushing for a greater share of Alberta's projected \$8.7 billion surplus, and Bronconnier feels now is the time to get such a deal done. "We've seen the incredible surpluses that are posted in each and every quarter by the provincial government," the CBC reported Bronconnier as saying. "If you're not going to reinvest back into municipalities now, when you've got a record surplus, record growth, when are you going to do it?"

Once funding issues have been addressed, the mayor said next on his agenda is a plan that will target "organized crime, gangs, drugs, prostitution, violent crimes involving weapons, and serious crime."

Wow. One has to wonder if the phrase "cleansed by fire" shows up anywhere in that plan.

BOUTET: GONE!

Well, after three and some years of being a writer and editor in various capacities for Vue Weekly, it saddens me to announce this is the last issue in which you'll see my byline, as I'm moving to Toronto to take a job at a daily publication. Thanks for everything, Edmonton. It's been nothing but radular.

And, uh... go Oilers. ☺



vuepoint

BY ROSS MOROZ

Electile dysfunction

No matter how Monday's election turns out, it's fair to assume that the winning party, even if they manage to achieve a majority, will do so with a little less than half of the popular vote. In the case of a majority, the scenario is pretty familiar: a party receives 40 per cent of the popular vote, giving them roughly 60 per cent of the seats in Parliament, which is a fairly comfortable majority. One hundred per cent of the power for 40 per cent of the votes—sounds kind of gross, really, but if you're reading this on Tuesday morning, it might have already happened.

So the Canadian electoral system is dysfunctional. So what? I mean, it's certainly no less dysfunctional than, say, the American system, right? And it's virtually the same as the one Britain has used for a couple of centuries, at least, isn't it?

Well, yes, this is true, but it might be worthwhile to note that, these countries (and India, actually) notwithstanding, no one uses our style of horse-race democracy anymore. Not in Scandinavia, not in Western Europe, not anywhere. Our system causes the outcome of every Canadian election to be grossly skewed. For example, in 1993, two million Canadians voted for the Progressive Conservative party, but the PCs won only two seats in parliament, at a million votes a pop. The Liberals, meanwhile, won one seat for every 32,000 votes cast. In 2000, 2.3 million people in Ontario voted Liberal, giving the party 100 seats from the province, but the 2.2 million Ontarians who voted against the Liberals ended up sending only three opposition MPs to Ottawa. You can even argue that our electoral system actually undermines national unity by favouring regional parties over those with broadly based support: in the last four elections, roughly the same amount of Canadians voted for the Bloc Quebecois and the NDP, respectively, but because the Bloc's support is concentrated regionally, they have continued to win between two and four times as many seats as the New Democrats.

Of course there are other options, such as proportional representation and single transferable vote. Obviously any change to the voting system would require more analysis than this, but the fact that not one of the major parties is discussing electoral reform is disappointing, if understandable: Why would a party change the system that brought them into power? For all their talk of empowering citizens, the fact that the Liberals and the Conservatives aren't talking about this issue speaks volumes about how they really feel about democracy in Canada. ☺



Race for the prize

With election day looming, *Vue* zooms in on the main candidates in what has become the country's most disputed riding, Edmonton Centre

By ROSS MOROZ

Anne McLellan is not panicking. Honestly, she's not. As she sits drinking tea and eating potato chips in her campaign headquarters on Jasper Avenue, she insists that she's not worried. Really. Despite a front-page story in that morning's *Edmonton Journal* citing a poll that shows her trailing Conservative challenger Laurie Hawn by seven points, and despite the Liberals' continued freefall in national polling, the Deputy Prime Minister seems almost disturbingly calm, collected, and confident as she tells *Vue* that, somewhat unbelievably, she still feels pretty good about her prospects for victory.

"I think it's fair to say generally [that the attitude of voters] towards me personally is very positive," says McLellan, who adds, in the mother of all understatements, that "there is some concern around what happened with the sponsorship situation."

No kidding. Thanks to the ubiquitous sponsorship scandal and resulting public inquiry, the once-mighty Liberals are faced with the increasingly likely scenario of a minority or even majority Conservative government, causing many observers to wonder if perhaps

McLellan's streak of tight wins may be about to come to an end. In a province that has been almost completely dominated by the Conservative party and its various predecessors for a generation, McLellan always faces an uphill battle towards re-election, and with the Liberal vote collapsing across the country and the collective might of the Conservative party focused on finally claiming this stubborn outpost of Liberal red in an otherwise Tory-blue province, national media attention has become focused on what is arguably the most hotly contested riding in the country.

"**NO ONE** is more devastated about what happened than those of us who are honest Liberals, because it makes us all look bad," McLellan explains, acknowledging that being associated with a Liberal party that has never been particularly popular in Alberta hasn't become any easier as of late.

"In terms of the Liberal party, yes, I am a member of the Liberal party, and for those of us who are long-standing members of the Liberal party we are more disturbed and distressed by what Mr. Justice Gomery's

report indicated than anyone. But if you look at what Mr. Gomery said, he was very clear: he said that what was done wrong was done by a relatively small group of people, and he went on to say that the vast majority of public servants and politicians are honest, hardworking people, and that's how I see myself."

Besides, as McLellan readily admits, support for the Liberal Party

PROFILE ELECTION

itself is not what continues to deliver increasingly improbable victories for the woman who is somewhat sarcastically nicknamed "Landslide Annie." "I get elected by a coalition of progressive conservatives, Liberals, and New Democrats," she explains. "People don't think of me as a Liberal; they don't even think of me as the Deputy Prime Minister. They think of me as Anne—my relationship with people is at that level. I think most people who vote for me vote for me."

MCLELLAN'S Conservative opponent, retired Royal Canadian Air Force CF-18 pilot Laurie Hawn, con-

cedes that his rival remains popular in the community, although he is confident that McLellan's luck is about to run out. "The coalitions that Anne has been able to build are there, but they are starting to realize that what she says and what the Liberals say just doesn't happen, and they're willing to give someone else a chance," he says. "The message from the voters I've been talking to has been increasingly that it's time for a change—enough is enough."

In Hawn's opinion, in addition to widespread voter dissatisfaction with the Liberals, the fact that his party is widely expected to win enough seats to form at least a minority government may also help him defeat McLellan. "Anne has some personal popularity, there's no question, but one of the other reasons she gets elected is because she was given a cabinet post and the position of deputy prime minister," he explains. "If those disappear, then her personal popularity may not be enough to sustain her."

That voters are upset with the Liberals isn't exactly a revelation, though, and when asked if a vote for him is merely a vote of protest

against the Liberals, rather than an endorsement of Conservative policies, Hawn insists that, when it comes to the main concerns of his constituents (which he identified as "crime, drugs and prostitution"), voters have been responding positively to his party's platform.

"Crime is a huge issue, and it's getting bigger, in terms of gang crime, gun crime and violent crime, and people are very concerned about this," he says, singling out the Liberals' drug policy as particularly troubling. "The Liberals are suggesting that we should de-criminalize possession of 15 grams of marijuana, and when people understand what that is in terms of actual marijuana cigarettes—and I've never smoked marijuana and wouldn't know [a joint] to see one—but that makes a significant amount of material that we don't want kids bringing to school."

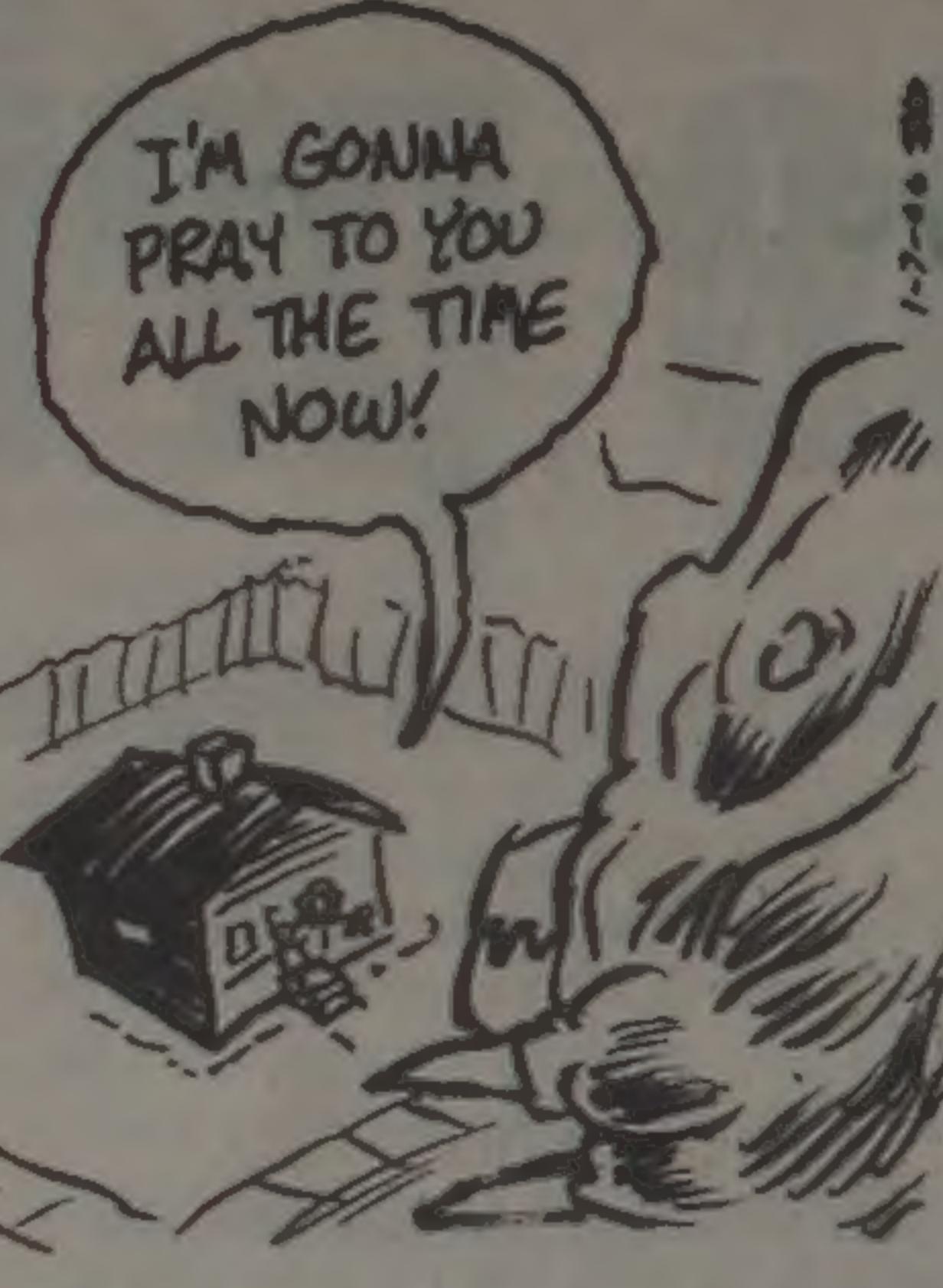
Of course, in a cosmopolitan, diverse, urban area like Edmonton Centre, many of the Conservatives' social policies—particularly their opposition to same-sex marriage, in addition to the aforementioned pro-

SEE NEXT PAGE

MOTHRA'S SONG



*Mothra, O Mothra

* If we were to call for help
Over time, over sea* Like a wave you'd come
Our guardian angel

Edmonton Centre

Continued from previous page

hition-based drug policy—remain unpopular, although Hawn underplays the importance of these issues. "If the most important thing to you is decriminalizing marijuana, don't vote for me," he states frankly. "I completely support civil unions, I completely support all of those rights and privileges... but I support the traditional definition of marriage, so if that's your only issue, don't vote for me."

"But if your issues are taxation and education and health care and child care and foreign affairs and security and defense and safe streets and on and on and on and on," he continues, "then vote for me, because for those issues we have the best policies."

WITH SO MUCH ATTENTION focused on the battle between the two front-runners, the other candidates in Edmonton Centre are struggling to simply be heard above the din, trying to raise issues important to them in a campaign they know they have no hope of winning.

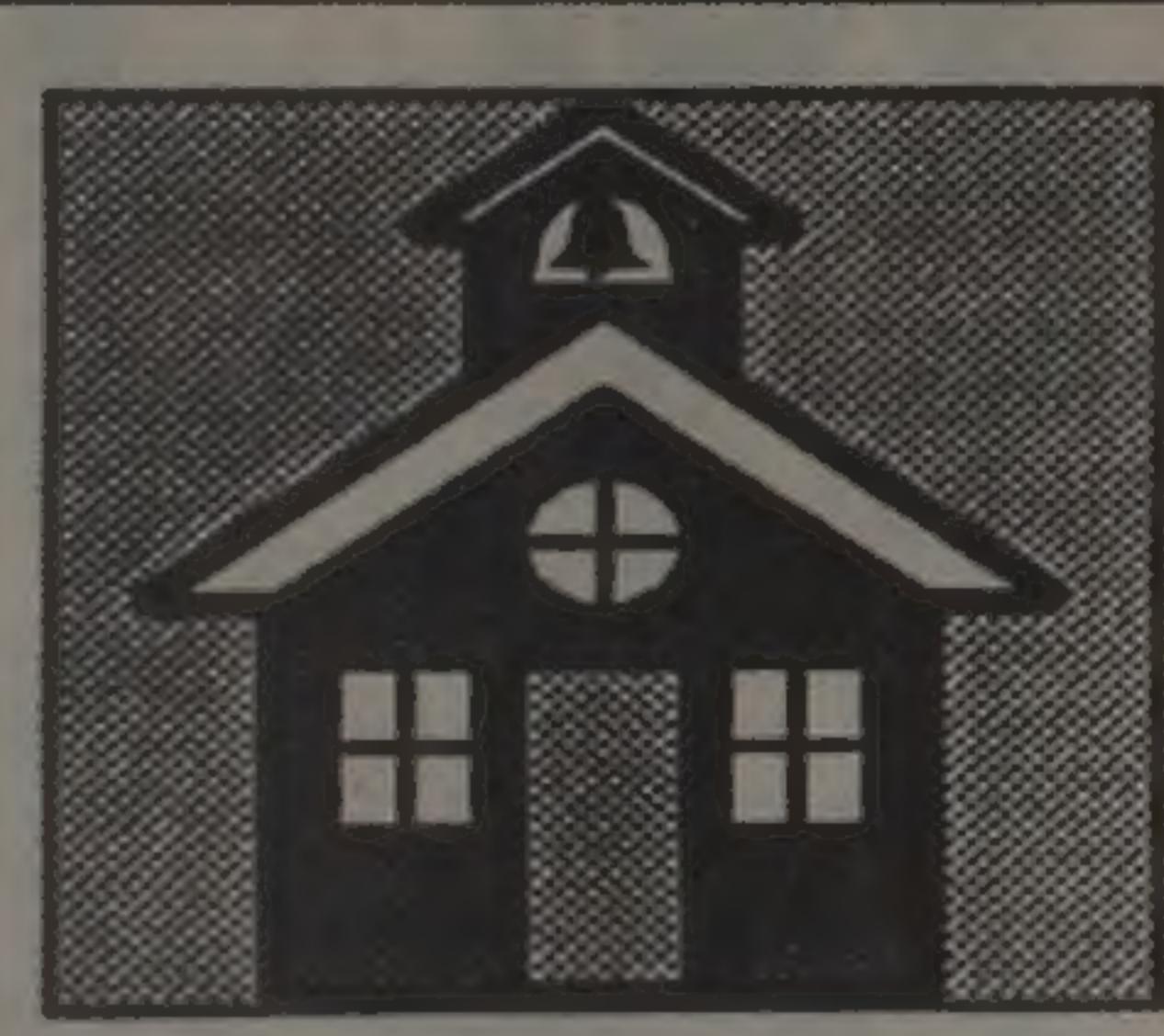
"I have always stood for and fought for NDP ideals, and I'm not going to stop now," says New Democratic Party candidate Donna Martyn, who is troubled by the Liberals' strategy of convincing NDP supporters to vote Liberal to help defeat Conservatives. "Strategic voting doesn't work anywhere if you expect to make your voice heard. You have

to vote for what you believe; otherwise you end up with a two-party system like they have in the States. Democracy requires that you have many voices, not just one or two."

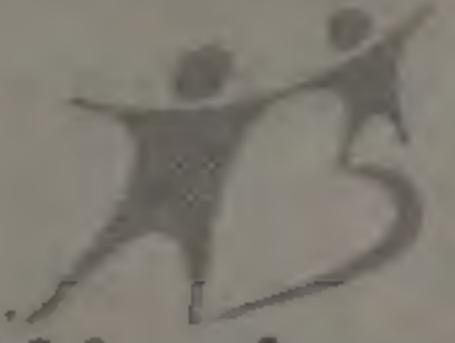
Martyn is realistic about her chances of being elected, but she feels her candidacy will have been a success if she is able to force the front-runners to discuss issues that she feels are most important to constituents of Edmonton Centre, including defending public healthcare, making post-secondary education affordable, and reducing poverty. "The NDP just being here is the only reason these issues are being discussed," she stresses. "And if we don't stand up for what we believe in, we'll always settle for second best."

Green party candidate David Parker concurs. "My main objective is to raise issues," says Parker, an instructor at NAIT who also ran for the Greens in Edmonton Centre in last year's election. "It's a very high-profile riding, and that's one of the main reasons I ran in this constituency: I want to get votes for myself, obviously, but beyond that I'm here to help Greens everywhere get votes, and being in the limelight, so to speak, I'm able to raise issues that wouldn't otherwise get talked about."

Parker is, unsurprisingly, most concerned with environmental issues, and while he's not particularly impressed with any of the "big three" parties, he reserves his most vitriolic attacks for the Conservatives. "The Tories getting in is the worst-case scenario. For so many reasons, the Conservatives are so much



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SATURDAY

TIME	THEATRE 1	THEATRE 2	THEATRE 3
10:00AM	India & Sri Lanka	Greece & Turkey	Mongolia
11:00AM	Europe Walking	Ecuador & The Galapagos	Climbing Kilimanjaro
12:00PM	Africa In Style	South American Overland	Along the Silk Road
1:00PM	Inca Trail & Peru	Trans Siberian Rail	Volunteer Vacations
2:00PM	Egypt & Jordan	Africa Overland	Kashmir Earthquake Relief
3:00PM	South East Asia	Grassroots Africa	Asia Overland
4:00PM	Himalayas	Morocco, Tunisia & Libya	Madagascar



SUNDAY

TIME	THEATRE 1	THEATRE 2	THEATRE 3
10:00AM	Ecuador & The Galapagos	The World's Best Treks	Asia Overland
11:00AM	Egypt & Jordan	Antarctica & The Arctic	Cycling Holidays
12:00PM	India & Sri Lanka	Africa Overland	Grassroots South America
1:00PM	Grassroots SE Asia	Trans Siberian Rail	Argentina & Chile
2:00PM	Inca Trail & Peru	China	South Pacific
3:00PM	Africa In Style	South America Overland	Family Adventures
4:00PM	Europe Walking	Centra America	Golf Escapes

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worse than any other party," he insists emphatically, calling the Tories "disgusting" and "despicable."

Of course, with such a tight race between the two frontrunners, it is not implausible that Hawn could win by a margin of victory smaller than the number of votes cast for Parker, which raises the question: if Parker is so "disgusted" by the Tories, why is he running in a riding where he risks splitting the vote and contributing to a Conservative victory?

"This is exactly the problem," he says, laying out the Greens' policy on electoral reform. "The first-past-the-post system that we have creates a two-party system. The only countries that still have it are Britain, Canada, the United States and India, of all places, and all of those examples are basically two party states—there's no diversity. Every other country in the world has some kind of proportional representation, which is a much more healthy system in my opinion."

HEALTHY OR NOT, however, our electoral system continues to allow one party to dominate the politics of this province, a reality McLellan ~~hopes will convince voters to once again somewhat reluctantly cast a ballot for the increasingly unpopular Liberals.~~ "Coming from this province, where there are so many Conservative MPs, part of what I think is really important is making sure the people who don't vote Conservative have a voice," she says. "Whether that voice is in opposition or government, those people deserve a voice. A third of the voters in this province do not vote Conservative, and it is not, I think, asking too much that they have at least one member speaking for them and their values and their interest."

Hawn, meanwhile, also acknowledges that many people in the riding might not share all of his party's values, and he is willing to offer some reassurance to constituents who may be uneasy with the idea of being represented by a Conservative. "At the end of the day, when I get elected I'm going to be the Member of Parliament for everyone in the constituency, not just the people who voted Conservative, and obviously there are issues that people will disagree with us on, and I am very capable and ready to sit down and discuss those issues. At the end of the day, when the next election comes along, if I've done that honestly and forthrightly and listened to them and helped them with their problems, then they'll keep me around. I'm not going to make everyone happy all of the time. No one can."

While he's doing his best to avoid appearing overconfident, it is obvious that Hawn, like many observers, expects McLellan to finally lose this time, and although she is willing to accept the possibility that her time might be up, "Landslide Annie" is keeping things in perspective.

"I'm focused on winning this election, and the Liberal Party of Canada is focused on winning this election nationally," she says. "After January 23rd, we'll see where all the chips fall, and you know what I've learned? Life goes on." ☀



Mom was right.

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in
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box

BY TB PLAYER
AND DAVID YOUNG

The Oilers spent last week playing its final three games this season against Eastern Conference teams. A visit to Madison Square Garden resulted in a 5-4 overtime loss to the New York Rangers, following an incredible 77-minute jersey retirement ceremony for Mark Messier. The next two matches weren't much better, with the Oilers losing 5-3 to the Ottawa Senators on Saturday and the suddenly-hot Buffalo Sabres by a score of 3-1 at Rexall last Monday.

Not afraid of Americans The Juniors totally stoked my appetite for some hardcore hockey nationalism. I'm all giggly about the upcoming Olympics, though I'm not sure if it's because of Canada's chances, or the U.S.'s non-chances. In the coming weeks we'll preview all the teams going into the tournament, but I'm going to jump the gun and throw out my medal predictions right now: Canada gets the gold, Russia takes the silver and the Czechs will settle for bronze. The Slovaks, Swedes and Finns will all play tough, with everyone else just happy to be there. Except the U.S., who, by the end of the tourney, will want to be anywhere else but Torino, watching everyone else win a hockey medal. (TB)

Gag order? I am going to put a gag order on myself regarding the Oilers' goaltending until something is done about it. I'm seriously tired of the whole thing. No, I'm not going to shut my mouth; it's just that the situation in the Oilers net makes me gag. (TB)

Net results If only TB would put an actual gag order on himself regarding everything else, life would be a little more pleasant. As far as Oiler goaltending goes, if you listen to fans, every time

another team's goalie has a good game, GM Kevin Lowe gets slammed for not signing or trading for that player. I'm sure if Joe Chatshow or Mary Broadband can figure out that the Oilers need a more reliable starting goalie, Kevin Lowe probably has this figured out, too. If someone like Roberto Luongo, Martin Biron or even Martin Brodeur (all goalies who have been "rumoured" to be coming to Edmonton) were available, they'd be here by now and we'd be missing a skater equally valuable. Sit tight. If the right deal is out there, we'll know by trade deadline. (DY)

Welcome to Bizarro World While D-man Cory Cross has looked remarkably solid over the last few games, poor Raffi Torres looks downright haunted. Every time Torres shoots (and doesn't score), I swear he's gonna cry. It'll come. He needs to chill out and just keep banging. It might not hurt to shave that landing strip off his chin, either. (TB)

Lacrossed signals On Friday, January 6, the Edmonton Rush of the National Lacrosse League played their inaugural match in Rexall Place. I wonder if any stoned ex-headbangers showed up and wondered where Geddy Lee and Neil Peart were. (DY)

Law of averages The average Oiler, believe it or not, is Washington's Brian Willsie. How do I know this? Based on the current 23-man roster the average Oiler is 6'1", 206 pounds, 28 years old and has 6.39 goals, 17.5 points and 32 penalty minutes so far this season. Willsie, 6'1" and 202 lbs, has six goals and 17 points with 34 penalty minutes and is 28 years old this March. (DY)



**Did he promise Gretz he
wouldn't cry? Hope not**
When the Oilers retired Paul Coffey's number earlier this

season, the ceremony took about 20 minutes and the Oilers took the courtesy of acknowledging that Coffey's career did take him to other teams, honouring his time as an Oiler first and his career as a whole. After the 77-minute melodrama the Rangers held for Mark Messier before last Thursday's game (*The Neverending Story*'s runtime, incidentally, is 94 minutes), you would think the speechwriters and former players were threatened with fines if they mentioned the words "Edmonton" or "Oilers" or that he won more than one Stanley Cup. (DY)

WINTER YOGA CLASSES

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
Yoga with Props (Intermediate) 5:30-7pm	Hatha Yoga (beginner) 10-11:30am	Hatha Yoga (beginner) 11:30am-1pm	Hatha Yoga (beginner) 5:30-7pm	Hatha Yoga (beginner) 10-11:30am	Hatha Yoga (beginner) 10-11:30am	Hatha Yoga (beginner) 1-2:30pm
Yoga with Props (beginner) 7:30-9pm	Lunch Hour Yoga (beginner) 12:10-12:55pm	Hatha Yoga (beginner) 5:30-7pm	Hatha Yoga (beginner) 7:30-9pm	Lunch Hour Yoga (beginner) 12:10-12:55pm	Pre-Natal Yoga 12noon-1:30pm	
	Hatha Yoga (beginner) 5:30-7pm	Hatha Yoga (beginner) 7:30-9pm	Ashtanga Yoga (beginner) 7:30-9pm	Hatha Yoga (level 1) 5:30-7pm	Hatha Yoga (beginner) 7:30-9pm	

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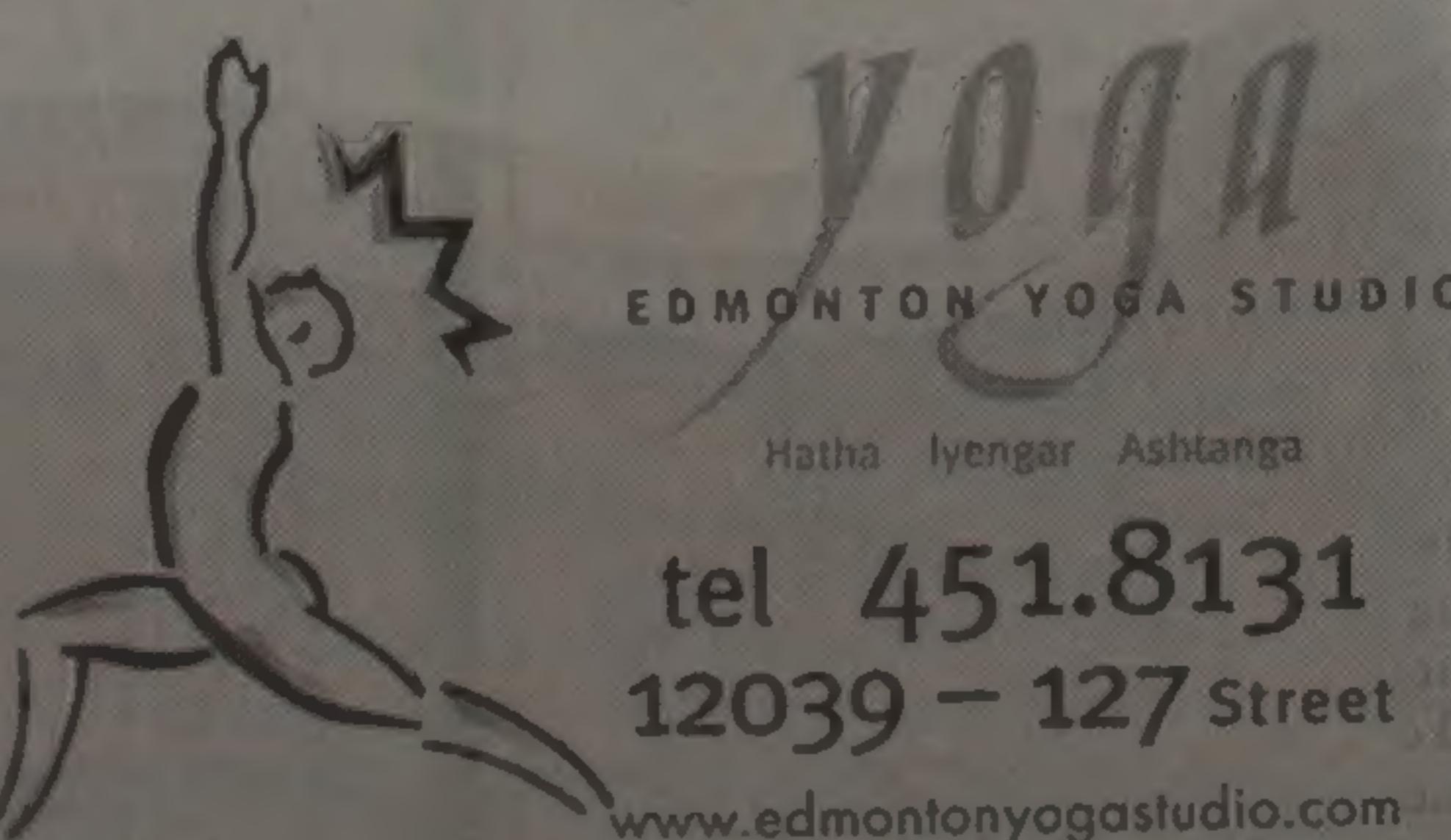
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Gnawing anxiety

T.C. Boyle's *Tooth and Claw* is an unsettling journey into raw human nature

By BRIAN GIBSON

Coraghessan Boyle has written 10 novels—most recently *The Inner Circle*, about Kinsey and his sexually experimental coterie of researchers—but he may well be one of contemporary literature's best storytellers. More accurately, Boyle fuses the lingering moods of Chekhovian literary fiction with suspense-spinning, yarn-ripping narratives—a strain of writing that can be traced back to Stevenson and Bierce. The shadowy feline whose yellow eyes glare from the cover of *Tooth and Claw*, Boyle's seventh collection of short stories, could be Conan Doyle's storied Brazilian cat, while the canine snarling its slavering jaws on the spine could spring from the pages of a Jack London adventure. But the 14 works inside tell the difference between the plot-centred exploits of a Saki or H.G. Wells, writing a century ago about human beasts and beastly humans, and the more evanescent, interior narratives of modern literature.

The tales deal with the psychic gashes that slowly scar, the primal urges that bite and scratch away under our thin social skins. Nerves stray to the boiling point, rising emotions must be endured or plunged into, and people are brought to their knees in the face of stark, raw nature. Each story sinks itself, fang and talon, into its characters' errors of judgment and surrenders to instinct. Boyle has an old-school gift for barbed, brilliant opening lines that hook, jerk you along the page and reel you, gasping for pause, right through the entire story. ("People can talk, they can gossip and cavil and run down this one or the other, and certainly we have our faults, our black funks and suicides and crofters' wives running off with the first man who'll have them and a winter's night that stretches on through the days and weeks like a foretaste of the grave, but in the end the only real story here is the wind.")

ONCE THIS inexorable momentum is loosed, Boyle jumps on, riding and reining in one hell of a tale as surely and sharply as possible. His control of narrative point of view and voice—from the casual slang of jaded Americana to the slightly quaint Scottish idiom—is masterful, and he doesn't overcook his adjectives, metaphors and lyrical language. Sentences remain tautly vivid: "I could feel the caffeine working its way up the steep grades and inclines of my circulatory system like a train of linked locomotives, chugging away."

In "When I Woke Up This Morn-

ing, Everything I Had Was Gone," Boyle offers an account of lost, lonely men whose lives are spiraling down into the bottle. It's a Raymond Carver-ish story about fathers and sons that dips quietly away from tragedy with the narrator's poignant, closing reflection.

A wry touch tickles the pages throughout, too. "Swept Away" manages to be amusingly melan-

cholic while offering the most natural yet bizarre impediment to romance since Cyrano de Bergerac's nasal extension—on a remote island, the couple's love struggles to endure winds so strong that "the sheep in the fields were snatched up and flung across the countryside like so many puffs of lint." A story about

people lining up in Florida for a chance to buy a house in a picket-fenced, Disney-fascist community (that stands in for an insular America) offers a parade of comically inflated figures.

Boyle's writing may not quite reach the peaks of short story masters who bridge banality and transcendence, the prosaic and epiphanic, with jarringly sublime endings. But in "The Swift Passage of the Animals," where Boyle makes you virtually feel the cold in your bones, he kindles a lingering spark in this story, which drifts around species extinction and a snow-stranded couple, until it fires the ending through with a charge of pathos. And then there's "Chicxulub," the super-beast of Boyle's menagerie, a story that slams home a family's sudden tragedy with the force of a hammer-blow. In just a

few pages, the author says more about the pain of abrupt loss than most writers could in a novel.

BOYLE CONVEYS ENNUI, alienation, or even insomnia with a startling acuity: "A wave of exhaustion crashed inside of me and pulled back from the naked shingle with a long slow suck and moan." And his descriptions of Mother Nature swing from the crisply sensual to the insightfully comic: "The sun hung overhead like an over-ripe orange on a limb just out of reach as the crowd released a long slow withering exhalation." His protagonists, usually male, are often a few shades away from self-awareness and slipping farther into a bubble of self-delusion.

From their first roaring lines to their last haunting whimpers, these stories tear apart the carcasses of most other writers' game efforts.

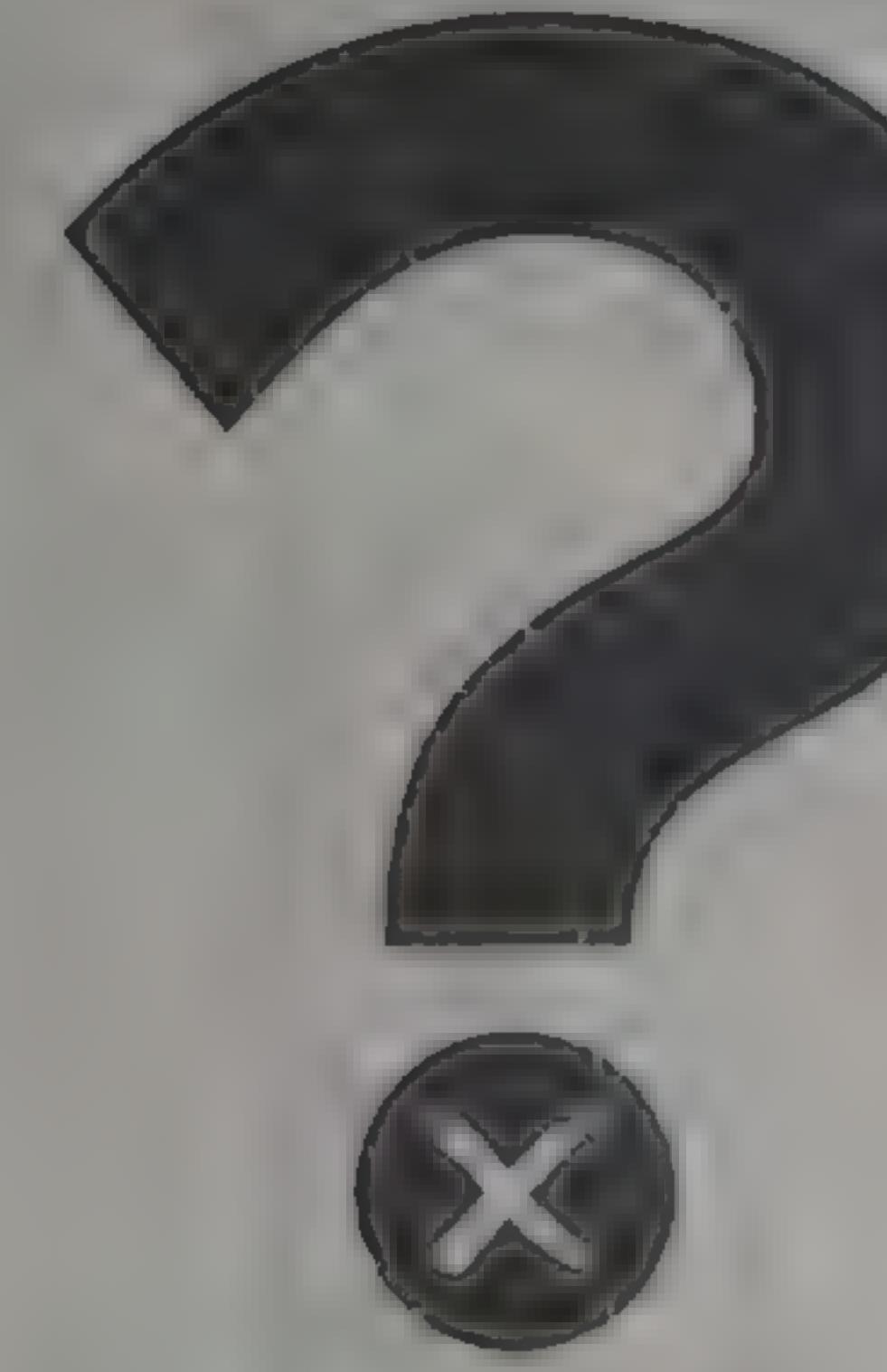


With its sleekly paced, wide-ranging tales, *Tooth and Claw* briefly captures, but never tames, T.C. Boyle's biting prose and wild imagination.

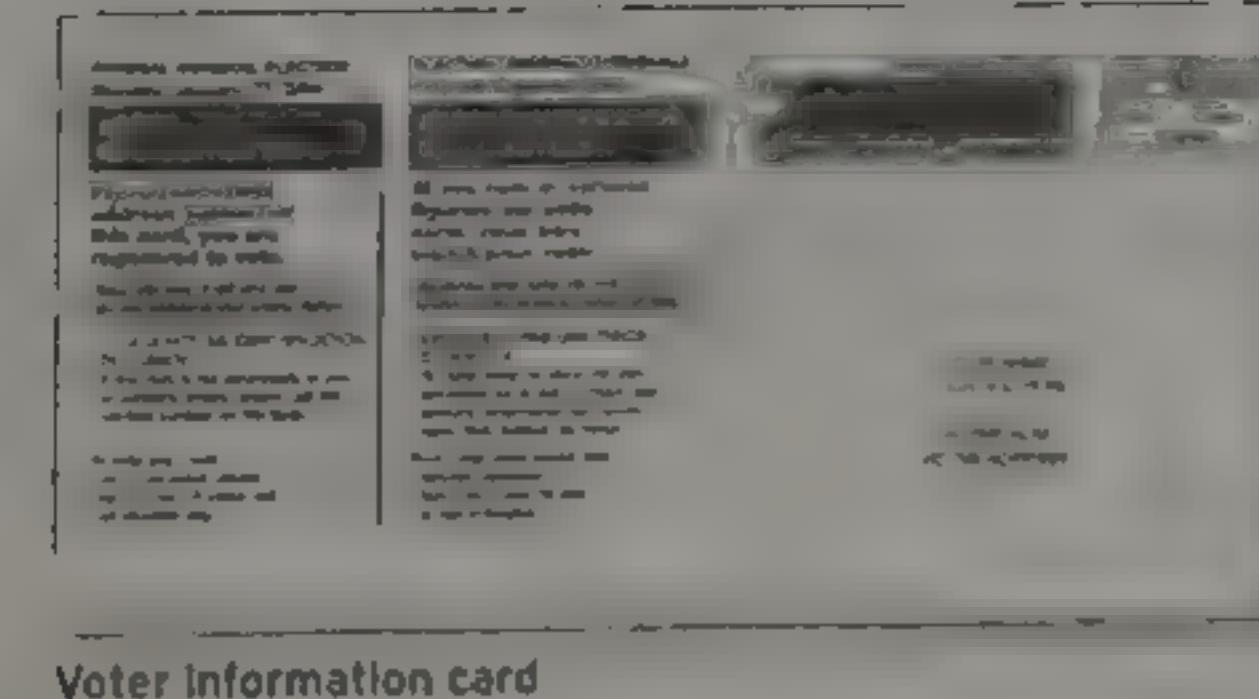
TOOTH AND CLAW

By T.C. Boyle • Viking • 274 pp. • \$36

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BY DARREN ZENKO

Art of war

"Art, like games, is a translator of experience. What we have already felt or seen in one situation we are suddenly given in a new kind of material. Games, likewise, shift familiar experience into new forms, giving the bleak and the blear side of things sudden luminosity." —Marshall McLuhan, *Understanding Media*, 1964

McLuhan was writing 10 years before Gary Gygax and Dave Arneson, under electric conditions, turned the ages-old, formalized, gentlemanly pursuit of tabletop wargaming into *Dungeons & Dragons*. Gygax was a rules fanatic, as his thousands of pages of charts, tables and diagrams quantifying magic attest, but this new medium of roleplaying gaming, of collaborative storytelling within a consensual framework, became almost overnight a major means by which nerds came to know themselves and cope with their world. I'd like to say that McLuhan would have approved (did he ever roll a d20 before he died?), but his Olympian insight, taking in all of human thought and experience, was so vast it made approval and disapproval irrelevant. Inasmuch as McLuhan disapproved of anything, he disapproved of the chauvinistic, hubristic, terrified refusal to accept that everything we are is a product of the media in which we live.

I guess McLuhan must also have disapproved of smartasses pretending to speak in his voice in order to score Brain Points—his cameo in *Annie Hall* haunts the nightmares of those of us who would drop his name. I'm not even seriously reading *Understanding Media*; I'm just picking at it in little bits and pieces while I wait for the my archaic XBox's pathetic drive to grind its way through loading *Morrowind* saves. Yeah, yeah... I'm off the wagon and back on the 'Wind. What can I say? I'm hungry, angry, lonely and tired.

Plus, I had a bomb dropped on me a couple of weeks ago that had every escapist-fantasy RPG receptor in my brain locked open and screaming for the junk. Buddy of mine, cleaning out his apartment, shows up at my door one night with a company-truckload of all his old D&D (Advanced D&D, second edition, the China White of gaming) handbook and source materials. The Manuals, the Handbooks, the Tomes, the Compendiums, the boxed sets—*Ruins of Myth Drannor*,

...Ruins of Midgard Mountain, Ruins of Dragon mountain II, Dragon Mountain, City of Splendors, City of Delights—Al-Qadim, Ravenloft, a dozen old Dungeon magazines... an evil cargo, a devastating white elephant, an irresistible narcotic. Normal thinking short-circuited: when you're in a living room with friends, having a good time, and your idea of a conversational gambit is "What D&D alignment do you think everybody is? I think you are definitely Chaotic Neutral," you know you've got a problem.

But, man, did the memories come back. From the fumbling and fitful D&D games of childhood (Helix, half-elf wizard, where are your barmaids now?) to those boozy '90s nights in my pal Thor's—real name; his brother's Odin—HUB apartment and our "Pirates of the Sword Coast" campaign. Man, did I get worked over in that one. "Games," McLuhan writes, "are dramatic models of our psychological lives providing release of particular tensions." I had just come off of 12 years of miserable school social life, but as much as I needed to release particular tensions I was in no way mentally ready to take on the role of Ramirez Balbuzard, swashbuckling pirate captain. I wasn't (and am not) one of those nerds who discharges their social anxiety by power-tripping at every opportunity; when Ramirez was eventually mutinized, brutalized and literally shat upon, my high-school worldview took it as bullying rather than the logical consequence of my shitty leadership and very un-piratical roleplay. If I could go back, knowing what I know now, I'd show those scurvy dogs—Mark, Phil, I'm talking to you—what four fuckin' attacks per round can do.

Mind alive with memories and fantasies of swords, spells and derring-do, with no real immediate possibility of getting back into a D&D campaign, I've turned to *Morrowind* for a quick fix. It's not enough. In McLuhan's terms, pen-and-paper roleplaying games are extremely "cool": even at their most formal and rules-rigid they demand a great deal of participation, calling upon every consumer to be also a creator. As open-ended and free (thus, cool) as *Morrowind* may be in comparison with other roleplaying videogames and videogames in general, it is still very "hot": the world is supplied, the contents of that world are supplied, the story is supplied, and players move along its many pathways. The freedom to decide whether to pick an evil wizard's pocket, zap him with a magical lightning bolt or bribe him off with a sackful of gold is a windowless prison compared with the infinite freedom of tabletop roleplaying.

What about online multiplayer roleplaying, you ask? That's a whole other set of issues; let's pick them up in a couple weeks, 'kay? Until then, remember: "Men without art, and men without the popular arts of games, tend toward automatism." ☺

ON THE COVER

Extremely weird Sisters



Russell Barr mixes violent fact with outrageous fiction and dresses it all in drag in darkly funny one-man show

BY PAUL MATWYCHUK

Actor/playwright Russell Barr has led one hell of a violent, surreal life. He's fed baking powder to pigeons so that he can watch them explode; he's worked as a drag queen at a seedy club named Madame Gillespie's; he's shoplifted countless coats and frocks from Glasgow's toniest boutiques; he's seen dogs driving cars, he's taken countless hits of ecstasy, he's had sex with the chief inspector of the fraud squad and he's been molested by a pedophile uncle; he claims his aunt is the infamous "Moors murderer" Myra Hindley and says he's seen a transsexual brutally murdered right before his eyes by a pair of transvestites.

Or has he? Part of the power of *Sisters, Such Devoted Sisters*, Barr's darkly comic one-man exercise in "confessional theatre," is that it's impossible to tell just how much of it is true, how much of it is fiction and how much is fiction that nevertheless expresses a metaphorical truth about Barr's life. "You never quite know what you're watching," Barr says over the phone from London. "I think you get the feeling that some bits must be true, just from the way they're told. But with other bits it's very unclear, and I never say what's the truth and what's not. I think all my writing has done that and played around with what's fact and what's fiction.... In my experience, one-man shows are either really good or really bad. And most of the good ones, I think, are the ones where you're watching something that you feel must be completely real. As an actor, you connect with the audience because you've got a story that must be told and you have no other choice of who to tell it to besides them."

BARR HAS HAD ROLES in such innocuous, mainstream British films as *About a Boy* and *The Land Girls*, but it's his stage credits—especially his work in Mark Ravenhill's international hits *Some Explicit Polaroids* and *Shopping and Fucking* for the take-no-prisoners London theatre troupe Out of Joint—that probably best reflect his true artistic personality. "I've always liked watching things that make you laugh and cry and horrify you all at once," he says. "I've got a sick sense of humour, which probably has something to do with it.... And I've never been shocked by this show. It seems abnormal to other people, but it seems normal to me. It's like normal life. I don't try to shock or be outrageous; I just want to present my normality to audiences."

"I never make moral judgments in my shoes," he continues, "and I don't make moral judgments about people, either. That was one of the first decisions I made when I started

writing the piece: I wouldn't make any moral judgments about anyone. I explain how they behave, but I don't say they're a bad person for what they do. Actually, in a way, I think life is much easier when we don't judge people for what they do. It's none of our business. There's been a big case here involving someone who's been arrested for looking at pictures of children having sex on the internet. Our culture's very obsessed with that now, and it's a bad thing, but I don't judge him for doing that. In a way, I can sort of empathize with him—he's had a very difficult life and now he's fucked up and gotten himself into trouble. I'm not condoning pedophilia, but I think we all make big mistakes in our lives and I think this play makes a strong case for seeing life for what it is. It's not easy; it's a struggle, and it's a struggle for everybody. This is all probably very obvious, but I only realized it very recently."

TIME AND AGAIN in our interview, Barr stresses that while he performs the entire show in drag—wearing a rather alarming blonde wig and a precariously high pair of heels—he doesn't think of *Sisters* as a drag show

PREVIEW **THEATRE**

or of 'Bernice Hindley' his alter ego, as a true drag character. "I don't

do drag at all," he says. "It's more like—you know those programs where they're interviewing someone who doesn't want to be recognized and so they're in a wig or in some kind of disguise? It's a bit like that: someone who's had to disguise themselves before they can tell their story. It's actually more like a weird funny version of me. The problem is that I look slightly frightening in drag. I look sort of sexy, but I also look sort of like an escaped mental patient."

"So the show isn't a drag show," he continues. "And it's also not really a piece of gay theatre. When I did it in Edinburgh, gay women were interested in it and really enjoyed it, but gay men found it quite offensive because I present a gay world that isn't very pleasant, and I'm not sure gay men like that. They want to think their world is fun and great, and my experience is that it's not."

Indeed, the piece's emotional climax is Barr's brutal first-hand description of the murder of a transsexual, a section that Barr says was extremely difficult to write and which he still finds upsetting to revisit, even in a theatrical setting. "It's tied up with a lot of my own history," he says. "It's not an easy or particularly pleasant show to perform. I see a therapist here and I said to her once, 'People always ask me if this show is cathartic, but it never has been cathartic for me.' And she said it never will be cathartic for me because I never resolve it or tie it up or figure out why it happened; I just repeat it. I think that's an illusion, that actors in some way solve things by performing them. I think it just makes them worse. But they're mad anyway; actors are all pretty mad to begin with." ☀

SISTERS, SUCH DEVOTED SISTERS
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Sun-kissed cuisine tempts the prairie palate at Murrieta's Bar & Grill

BY CHRISTOPHER THRALL

Ah, whimsy: where would romance be without you? Armed with free movie tickets, my bride and I decided to stop for a bite on our way downtown, and without a destination in mind, we were easy marks for Whyte Avenue's culinary pull. We ended up at **Murrieta's Bar & Grill**, missed our movie and had one of the most succulent meals we have ever enjoyed!

We stepped through the wooden doors and into an elegant, modern restaurant. The hosting station faced a group of leather couches, ideal for waiting or lounging, while the lounge itself spread before us. The original hardwood floors were left unfinished as the only rustic touch among the mocha colour scheme, dark wood furnishings and crisp white linens. The cumulative effect was stunning, but nothing prepared us for the impact of the main dining area.

Our host paused, accustomed to first-time diners gawking at the two storey room. One wall was dominated by an enormous, angled field-stone fireplace with wood accents

that extended halfway across the ceiling. Huge windows gazed out on Whyte wanderers, but were wooden slatted against the winter night. As a finishing touch, the room was divided from the lounge by an enclosed, dark wood wine rack that stretched up a storey and a half and boasted its own rolling ladder.

We were left with Murrieta's brief but varied menu and progressive wine list, so called because each section started with the lightest-bodied type and progressed to the most full-flavoured. The extensive, reasonably priced selection was from all over the Pacific Rim and many were avail-

REVUE WEST COAST

able by the glass. My wife was inclined towards a white, so we tried Washington's Chateau Ste. Michelle Pinot Gris, on special for \$7.48 per glass. We accompanied our wine with grilled jumbo prawns (\$12.07) from the appetizer list.

THE APPETIZERS' brief but tempting descriptions had me fantasizing about building my own tapas feast. However, once our waiter described the special, I was lost: a six-ounce striploin under crab and lobster fondue (\$26.91) had me at hello. My wife opted for the "simple" salmon (\$22.28) under a spicy maple ginger dressing. I found the prices baffling,

since every seafood-heavy flatbread, pasta and salad selection ended in a seemingly random number of cents.

We discussed the mysterious pricing over our Pinot Gris, which arrived immediately in chilled sidecars along with four slices of light, fluffy, nut-flavoured bread and soft whipped butter. The wine was pale to almost transparent and offered a light citrus scent when swirled; its thin legs streamed quickly down the sides of my glass. We each took sips, then longer drinks, savouring a surprising burst of fruit which sparkled and danced on our palates before mellowing quickly to spicy dryness. This Pinot was far more sophisticated than the sweet German whites I normally sampled, and when combined with our appetizer, it proved to be a real treat.

Four large shrimp, grilled in their shells, were delivered under swirls of green onion and surrounded by a moat of red pepper butter sauce. My wife considered it cold tomato soup, but I found it complemented the firm prawn flesh very well with a slightly spicy aftertaste.

I was in danger of finishing my wine before my entrée arrived, so I switched to constantly-refilled water as the room filled up with mostly upscale, older clientele. A couple of groups contributed to the increase in noise and I wondered about the

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DISH WEEKLY

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Here's Taloukin' at you, kid

Of all the Lebanese bistro in all the towns in all the world, you have to try La Shish Talouk

BY CHRISTOPHER THRALL

In my wife's absence, I was deprived of my accustomed second opinion and seized on the opportunity to invite a prospective Dish reviewer who had approached me speaking highly of La Shish Talouk's Lebanese cuisine. We entered the crowded little bistro early on a Tuesday evening and passed into another world.

The space was geared towards its abundant take-out crowd (the outdoor patio would almost triple its available space), but we seized one of the four tables and craned our necks to read the brightly-coloured menus above the grill and till. The atmosphere was a little distracting: under searing florescent lights, bright yellow warred with sky blue on the walls, broken only by tourism posters featuring breathtaking scenes of Lebanon. Nonetheless, the array of mysterious combinations pictured on the menu was a delight. Shish Talouk, Kebabs and Kafta shared space with shawarma options, sides of falafel and odd vegetarian choices.

My companion had already eaten before, so she volunteered to share whatever I chose. I decided on the Shish Combo (\$12.95) with falafel and garlic potatoes (\$4.45 each) on the side. I joined the crowd milling at the counter to place my order. While I waited, I grabbed a strawberry-guava and a guava nectar (\$1.85 each) from the cooler and figured I'd risk the "two-piece dessert"

option for \$1.95. I was delighted to discover four pieces of baklava on my trays when I was called to carry the feast back to our table.

THE RESTAURANT was louder than I generally prefer, a curse of its size and phenomenal popularity, but any irritation I felt at the boy striking his bottle cap against the marble counter vanished at the sight of our meal. Our forks flashed into action as the seductive aromas of garlic, roast tabouleh and grilled meats battled

REVUE LEBANESE

for luscious supremacy in our noses.

I started with the most recognizable side dish, a mound of potato chunks under a generous dollop of intensely garlicked mayonnaise. The potato was firm but yielding, and I decided to treat the sauce with caution. I carved into one of the four fist-sized falafel balls next. I was undecided at first about the grainy texture, but the warm, hearty similarity to experimental vegetarian meatloaf won me over. My enthusiasm was also due to a wonderful, light Middle Eastern ranch dressing and a heap of chives.

I tasted my strawberry-guava nec-

tar in an effort to cleanse my palate before assaulting the Combo. I found myself tasting the drink a couple more times. It was thicker than I expected, with a syrupy sweetness that satisfied a deeper craving than thirst. Unfortunately, the strong strawberry tones masked much of the peach-infused pear flavour of the guava. The nectar was far more effective at washing down Lebanon's boisterous cuisine than North America's anemic juices or criminally sweet, sugary pops.

MY COMPANION was already a couple of bites ahead of me before I started into La Shish Talouk's combination plate. She pointed out the sensational salad of thick tomato and cucumber chunks glistening in olive oil and coated in herbs. I also scooped a couple of mouthfuls of darkly speckled rice accented with dips of rich hummus before spearing my first piece of meat off one of the three kebabs.

The first piece happened to be grilled chicken, its surface seared to keep the interior juicy. My delighted bites sheared through effortlessly and I reached immediately for the beef kebab that my companion was ecstatically devouring. The tender beef was more sharply spiced and left traces of

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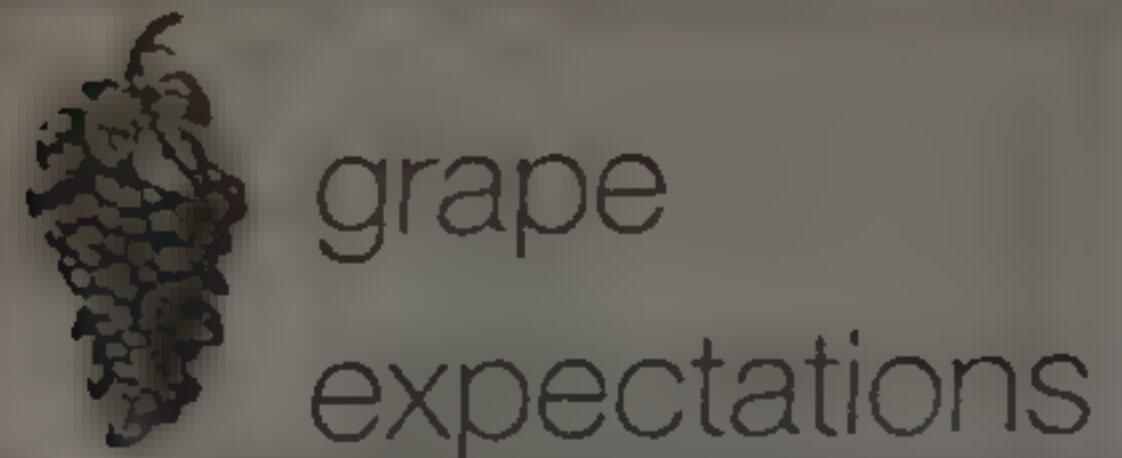
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BY JAMES LYLE

THIS WEEK: Torres Mas La Plana Cabernet Sauvignon 1999 (\$40)

One of my favourite things about going to nice restaurants is the opportunity to study their wine lists and try a few new juices. Such was the case last week as found myself at La Bohème with my wife, poring through their list and looking for something that I hadn't tried. Our server recommended a Cabernet from Spain, and I must admit I was quite skeptical, as I have not yet tried a wine from Spain I truly enjoyed.

That said, I am always up for a new wine experience. This deep ruby red wine exuded a sharp nose, but with a few moments of exposure to oxygen the smell rounded out to a nice, warming scent. Its evolution certainly piqued my interest, and upon the first taste, I found it to be quite light in both fruit and tannins, but possessing an even progression from the front of the palate to the back. What was particularly interesting was that the more sips I had, the more fruit was exposed, evolving from a fairly limp beginning to a richer end. I sampled this wine as I ate my bison tenderloin, and though it didn't take away from the meal, it certainly didn't add to it, either.

This wine may have me reaching for more Spanish bottles during my next visit to the store, but should I try this wine again I may pair it with something a little lighter, perhaps pork. ☺

Murrieta's

Continued from page 14

modern design; these stunning visuals and soaring empty spaces look so good in artists' renderings, but don't consider the practicality of sound baffles. I could only dread trying to hold a romantic conversation on a busy Friday night.

OUR CHARMING YOUNG WAITER with an easy smile distracted us from the noise by delivering two steaming plates of heaven. On each was the epitome of West Coast cuisine: small-looking portions of delicately-dressed delectables under light sauces, stacked vertically. Airy whipped potatoes formed the base of each dish, and crisp sautéed vegetables helped push the meats upward. Above the sauces, a pile of julienned salad formed a colourful crown.

My wife lunged towards me after a few bites, her fork outstretched. I sampled a glazed carrot and was deeply impressed. The maple rushed sweetly across my tongue, while pepper and ginger flavours held fast long after I swallowed. She was convinced that she had me beat at our perpetual ordering competition, but she hadn't tried my fondue.

My juicy medium-rare striploin was enhanced (and completely outshone) by luscious pieces of lobster and crab in their thick, salty cream sauce. My wife tried an asparagus stalk, then a piece of steak, and shot me a dirty glance. "I was sure I had won this time!" she exclaimed. She

had one more taste before returning happily to her flaky salmon.

DESPITE THE DECEPTIVE SCALE of our meals, we cleaned our plates. The delicate flavours kept their integrity all the way through, refusing to blend into each other and delighting with every bite. Because I simply could not put down my fork, I even had some wine left by the end of my meal. "It's been a while since I had a meal that really knocked my socks off," my wife commented. "That was outstanding."

We ended our evening with the double chocolate cake (\$7.91) and two forks. It was a difficult choice: the dessert list included my beloved crème brûlée and a baked Alaska in bananas Foster. A dark, sensual aroma preceded our choice to the table. The warm, rich cake was perfectly balanced between light vanilla bean gelato and an intriguing passion fruit caramel sauce.

After two hours of exceptional dining and a reasonable \$90 bill plus tip, I was annoyed; I grumbled as we stepped back into the chilly evening: one of our best meals of 2006 was savoured on the first review of the year! My wife pointed out that every week brings a new culinary discovery in and around Edmonton, and we never knew what the next restaurant would bring. Murrieta's has set the bar very high, and I am eager to see how Edmonton's wondrous, diverse dining scene meets the challenge. ☺

MURRIETA'S BAR & GRILL
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La Shish Talouk

Continued from previous page

delicious heat on my tongue. I was very happy with both, but then shifted aside some violet garnish on my plate to spy the kafta kebab.

The spiced ground beef was simply exceptional. Even more tender than the beef kebab, it left a sweet spice aftertaste that carried hints of cinnamon and cloves. I grudgingly allowed my companion one of the pieces from the skewer, while I tried one of the violet stalks and grabbed up my nectar after biting into the mouth-puckeringly pickled turnip.

There was no way that two people could finish this staggering amount of food. I packed up a hearty lunch's worth of leftovers before we split the baklava. Out of the two types, I found the cookie-like stick to be quite dry and without much flavour. However, the bite-sized, round baklava redeemed the pair. Honey permeated the treat without drenching the crisp layers of phyllo pastry. It left the burning sweetness at the back of my throat that is the hallmark of great baklava.

My companion and I were stuffed, and I think I may have recruited another writer. Our table was immediately occupied by the next pair of guests. I threw some toonies into the jar on my way out, bringing my total to over \$30, and swore I would return. Next time, however, it would be for take-out. ☺

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Marmot magic

What better way to get into the Jasper in January spirit than a trip to Marmot Basin?

BY COLIN CATHREA

It was Friday afternoon and we were cruising down the Yellowhead towards a much-anticipated visit to Marmot Basin. As we crested the rise of Folding Mountain just outside the park gates, however, we saw a wall of thick white fog in front of us. Rolling down to the park

gates, we couldn't see any mountains, and we quickly realized that the "fog" was a big, dense bank of snowstorm. With the temperature hovering just below zero, the highway turned into a slippery, slimy mess. I popped in the Beatles' *White Album* and thought how this was

just what the doctor ordered to kick off Jasper in January 2006.

Sliding into Jasper, the town was quiet. Where else in the world can you go to a ski destination with the beauty and splendour of Jasper and be virtually alone? Add a dozen centimetres of snow, and the silence is

almost deafening. We parked our truck in front of a bank of closely spaced doors at the Tonquin Inn, our home for the weekend. I assumed the room would be small, but when we opened the door we were greeted by a split level with a big stone fireplace and a den: just another example of those hidden gems you can still find after travelling to a ski town for over 30 years.

The next morning, we ate and dashed to the hill. Maybe I was a little overzealous, because we ended up in the lodge at 7:55 a.m. in the pitch dark. My wife kept looking at me like I should be committed, but that's okay; I was going to be up and down the mountain a hundred times by noon.

I made it down to the lift by 8:50 a.m. with the other diehards waiting for the fun to begin. The big, fat flakes were still coming down, adding to the half-metre that had already fallen that week. I was skiing solo, as on power days like this there are no friends, wives, or lovers; it's every powder pig for themselves.

BOOM! The first avalanche-control explosive of the morning shook the stillness. For my first run of the day, I headed over to the upper T-bar and got to the top of Highway 16 for a glide through light, fluffy powder that rolled over my knees. The first "Yahoo!" of the morning uncontrollably burst from my mouth as I sped towards the triple chair.

I fit in three more hard runs down 16, Exhibition and Caribou Knoll before I started to worry that I was going to burn myself out by noon. By 9:30 a.m. they had set off at least six or seven more avalanche-control blasts. From my perch on

the triple chair, I could see the last blast bring down a fairly big slide that rolled into the lower part of the Knob Traverse. The Knob Chair stopped, presumably for precautionary reasons, which was not conducive to my plans, as I wanted to get into that virgin powder before the sleepyheads made it up the mountain. Still, I was glad to have well-trained professionals keeping us safe. A few blasts later, it looked like they'd covered the entire south bowl by 10 a.m.

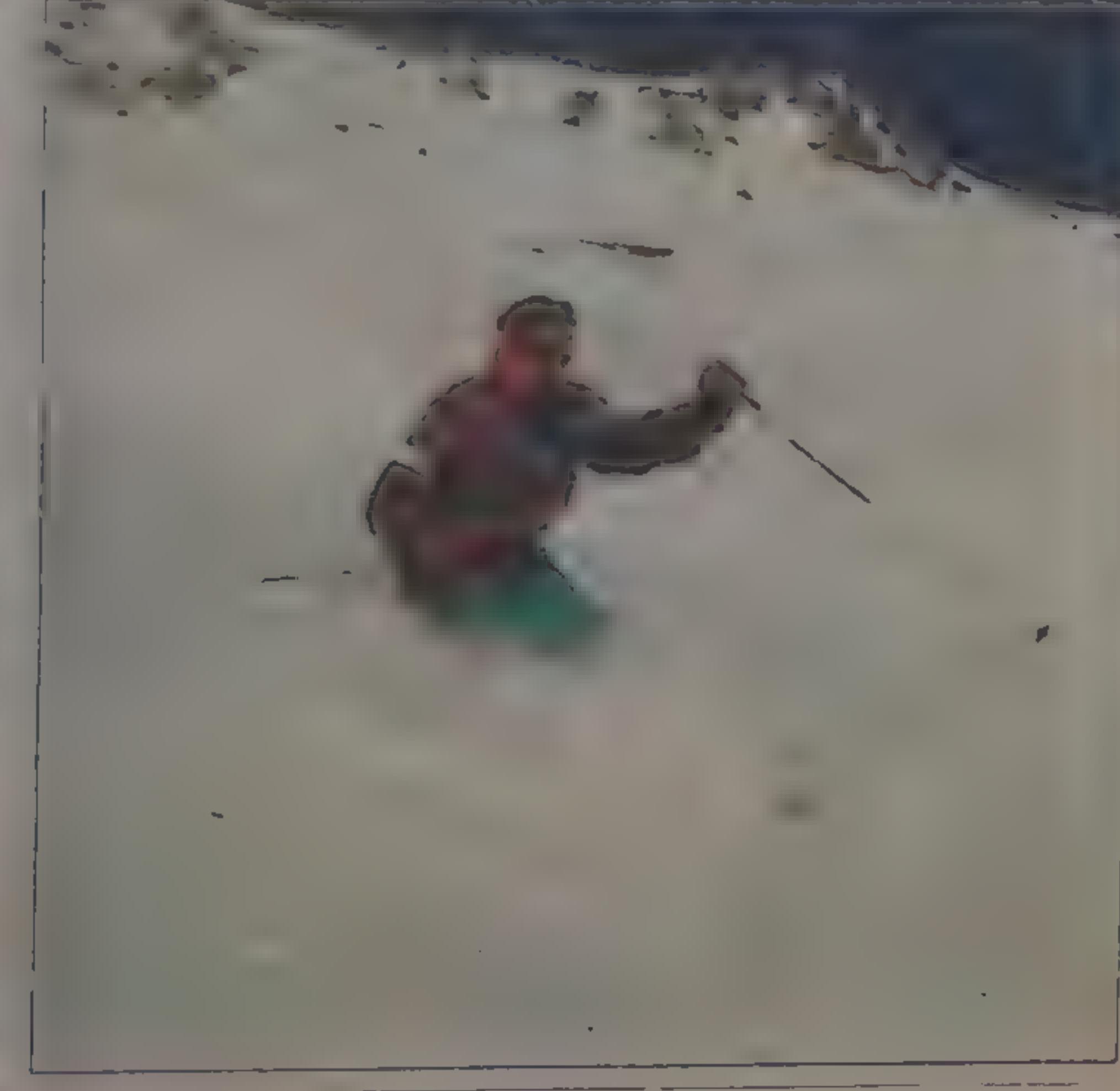
My legs were burning a wee bit so I decided to take an easy run next but as I was heading over to Basin Run via Paradise, I spotted the terrain park, wide open and untracked. With a little speed, I wound up some big round turns and caught some air over the rollers. What a blast popping off jumps into knee-deep powder is

From there, I spotted the Eagle Express open, and

I took off past the upper chalet to a new challenge. By this point I had done the glades a few times and still hadn't crossed any tracks, so I decided to head over to Hobbit's Hollow, where the rolls and drops were softened by the cushy snow. It was 11 a.m. and my legs were friggin' burning, but I couldn't stop myself.

SIMPLY BY CHANCE I met up with my old buddy Rob Ellen who used to be the marketing and sales guy up here, but he's now been justifiably promoted to mountain operations supervisor. I asked if I could tag along while he saw to some of his on-mountain tasks—with conditions like this, I didn't want to stop for an in-office interview if I could avoid it.

SEE PAGE 23



The most wonderful time of the year

With Jasper in January in full swing, *Vue* looks ahead to the month's main events

BY HART GOLBECK

For 18 years, Jasper has welcomed visitors to their annual winter festival. Jasper in January is well known amongst ski and snowboard enthusiasts, and with the addition of cultural and social events it has grown into a festival that, for 17 days, invites everyone to enjoy what the town and ski hill have to offer. This was my 10th year attending the festivities, and once again I was anticipating a weekend of friends, fun and some memorable turns.

It all started Friday night with a festival Kick-Off Party at the Whistle Stop Pub. The suds were flowing and platters of free food were everywhere as wall-to-wall locals and visitors mingled, reacquainted themselves, and shared stories—or myths—of their greatest run. The joyous atmosphere was fuelled by the endless snow falling outside, which had started sometime in the afternoon and continued through the night. This festival is always special, but this year's kick-off was one of the best ever, with 15 to 25 centimetres

of fresh snow greeting us as we ascended the slopes in the morning.

AFTER SPENDING the morning making some incredible turns, I headed down to the Caribou Chalet to begin my next festival adventure. The Amazing Chase was about to begin and I was on one of the six teams of five contestants who would vie for the coveted Media Challenge Trophy. Each team consisted of four media types and a local to help guide them through six gruelling tasks at various locations on the hill. Well, they weren't actually that gruelling, but we did have fun and, with the help of Bruno from Whistlers Inn and Steve Hogle from CFRN, we easily managed to sweep all competition aside and cruise to victory. The tasks this year included distinguishing four types of coffee by taste, finding a buried avalanche transceiver, singing a song with six marshmallows in your mouth, wrapping a competitor in a snow fence, a cafeteria tray slalom race, and get-

ting wrapped up in toilet paper.

The big trophy ended up being a cheesy plaque, but it does look good on my wall. Many thanks to all the organizers and volunteers who made the race informative, memorable and fun, as this would be only their first of many such events over the next two weeks. The following is a small glimpse of what's to come and where you can enter and enjoy.

PREVUE

Thursday, January 19 is dubbed Juan Helluva Nite at the Sawridge Hotel. New to the festival this year, this authentic Mexican bash is a fundraiser for the local Rotary Club and includes a reverse draw, where one lucky partygoer will win a trip to Mexico at the end of the night. Friday is the big chilli cook-off at the Amethyst Lodge. This mainstay is riddled with secret recipes, friendly bribes and killer chilli that numbs the senses. If you're in town by 6 p.m. it's

definitely worth checking this out.

THE WEEKEND IS RIDLED with wine and cheese tastings at several hotels and demo days on the slopes, as well as a daily Family Fun Race, which is a course set up on the lower slopes where all can race just for the fun of it. Snow sculpting is scheduled on the Parks Canada Information Centre lawn on Saturday.

On Monday, January 23, the real racing begins. The Fun, Fat and Forty is an open event where \$30 gets you on the starting grid. (I'm told you only need one of the attributes to qualify.) Skiers, boarders and telemarkers are welcome. Following the race at 5 p.m., competitors meet at the De'd Dog Pub in town to relive their spills and thrills and gather up any rewards.

On Wednesday, things get a little more serious with the Mountain To Valley Race. Teams of five compete to see who gets down the hill first. This event includes skiing, running and biking. If the weatherman does

not cooperate an alternate ski, skate and swim triathlon will be set up. Thursday and Friday there will more local beer tasting, wine tasting and a Warren Miller flick at the Jasper Activity Centre.

ON SATURDAY on the slopes you can partake in an Avalanche Awareness Demo. I watched Parks Canada Warden Darian Sillence and his avalanche dog Joppo in action last weekend and it was pretty cool. On average, 15 Canadians are fatally buried by avalanches annually and these demos are to make us aware of the dangers and what guidelines to follow. Watching Joppo plough through the snow with ease to recover buried articles of clothing was interesting as well.

The final social event of the festival is the La Cabane à Sucre at the Fairmont Jasper Park Lodge on Saturday, January 29 from 5-9 p.m. Maple syrup and snow are the main theme of this sociable event that caters to the entire family. If you're a skier or boarder, the highlight of Jasper in January is the great reduction in lift ticket and accommodation pricing. Adult daily lift passes are only \$40 and hotels are up to one-third off.

If you're planning to head to Jasper for this festival, grab a brochure when you arrive. They are readily available anywhere in town and they have the exact times and locations of any the aforementioned events and many more I failed to tell you about. Now that Mother Nature has cooperated, they only need you to make it a success. ☺



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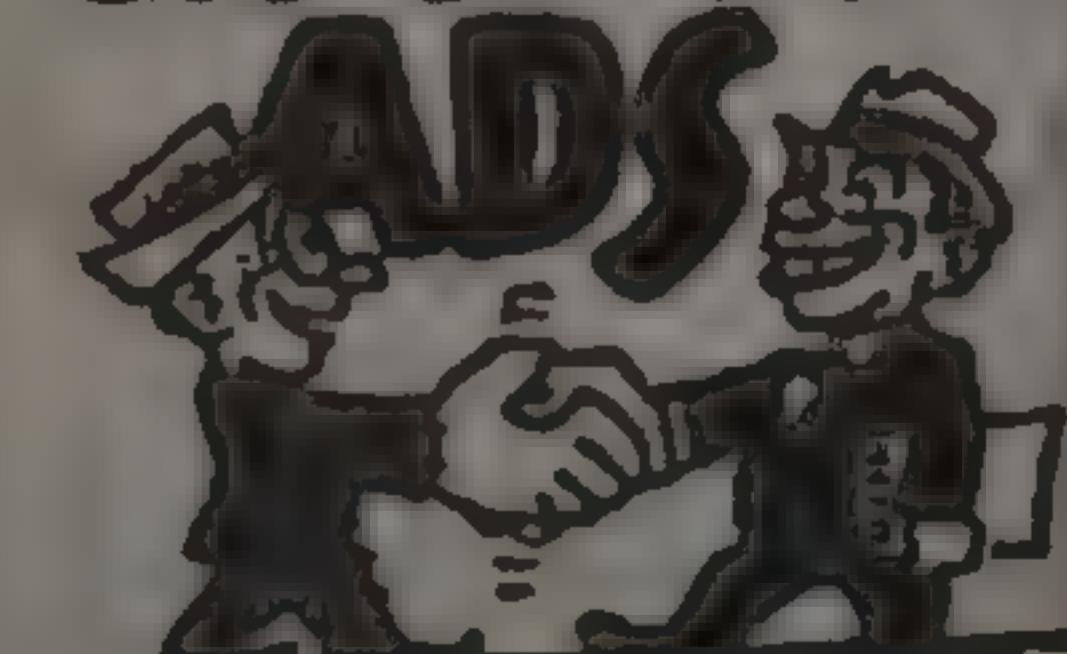
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In good Company

Newly opened Jasper Brewing Co. serves up fine stout and gourmet meals to hungry travellers

BY JEREMY DERKSEN

It had been an active day of skiing and then swimming at the Jasper Aquatic Centre, and while my friend and I had both taken a fair swill of pool water in a (mostly) friendly water polo game, we hadn't eaten since lunch and it was getting late. As we strolled down Connaught Drive, our appetites spurring us on a little quicker than we would normally have gone on a nice, quiet evening in Jasper, we debated where we wanted to eat until we saw the Jasper Brewing Co.'s faux coat-of-arms, with its moose antlers and maple leaf girded by yellow ribbon. A quick peek inside revealed dimly lit, cozy banquette seating and high bar tables where several groups sat enjoying the company of friends.

We entered and were immediately taken in by the subtle design: austere grey stone walls accented with wood trim, and in the middle a long bar with a blonde oak top reflecting soft light into the large, darkened room. A friendly, attractive waitress

was instantly at our side, guiding us to a booth by the windows. The cushioned seats were comfy, and if not for my growling stomach, I might have stretched out and gone to sleep. Instead, I scanned the tapas menu, choices ranging from traditional pub fare like nachos and wings to fancier items like ahi carpaccio (seared rare tuna with ginger dressing on rice crackers) and sautéed tiger prawns. A tough decision, but in the end I chose some Cajun corn fritters, a.k.a. Hush Puppies (\$8).

The entrée selection was even more tantalizing—Mussels Pontchartrain served over a Creole white wine sauce; St. Charles medallions grilled in red wine raspberry-blackberry demiglace; or blackened bass with roasted jalapeno-almond butter—but when you're on the point of starving, sometimes all you want is a homey, hearty meal, so I ordered the bison burger (\$10) and a pint of the brewery's own 6060 stout (\$4.95). Obviously, my friend and I were on the same wave-

length—he chose the same.

BY NOW I'd had time to figure out what the place was all about. The restaurant calls itself a brewpub and eatery, but neither really deserves second billing—both food and brew merit equal emphasis. Jasper Brewing Co. brew their own brands and this is certainly one of this establishment's premier appeals; they even offer tours of the brew facilities situated behind a glass partition at the back of the room. A long dedicated

Guinness man, I am usually wary of micro-brewed stouts, but my first taste of the 6060 was pure heaven after a hard day's ski. The 6060 takes its name from the "midnight black, 'Bullet Nosed Betty' steam engine 6060" (cousin to the one parked for eternal posterity at the entrance to the railway yards), and this stout

deserves its famous namesake. Its soft yet rich flavour on the tip of the tongue belies the bold, slightly sweet fruity overtones as you wash it down. And, remarkably, it has almost no aftertaste—just enough to leave you wanting another sip.

There are four other house beers, and the Brewing Co. has a special option to taste all five, but I was happy, and it was time for food. Our waitress came bearing a large dish heaped with Hush Puppies, those golden brown Cajun delicacies, and I dug in. There were so many of the savoury jalapeno corn fritters that for a second I wondered if we had been given a double order. But I quickly forgot about it as I bit into one of the piping hot fritters after liberally dousing it in a moderately spicy Creole sauce. My friend and I stopped just short of devouring

them all, remembering we still had our main courses coming.

IT'S NOT OFTEN that I'll choose a burger from the menu, but I'd trusted my instincts, and my instincts were right. I'm sure I would have enjoyed goat cheese sirloin or sweet peppered pork tenderloin (two other options) but my bison burger was a cut above. I began to understand why people rave about wild game meat; the bison was leaner than regular hamburger and twice as tasty. Simple toppings—lettuce, tomato and a sweet Dijon relish—enhanced the refined flavour of the meat without smothering it.

Sometimes, the measure of a good meal is not how creative the dish is, but whether a chef will let the feature ingredient stand out on

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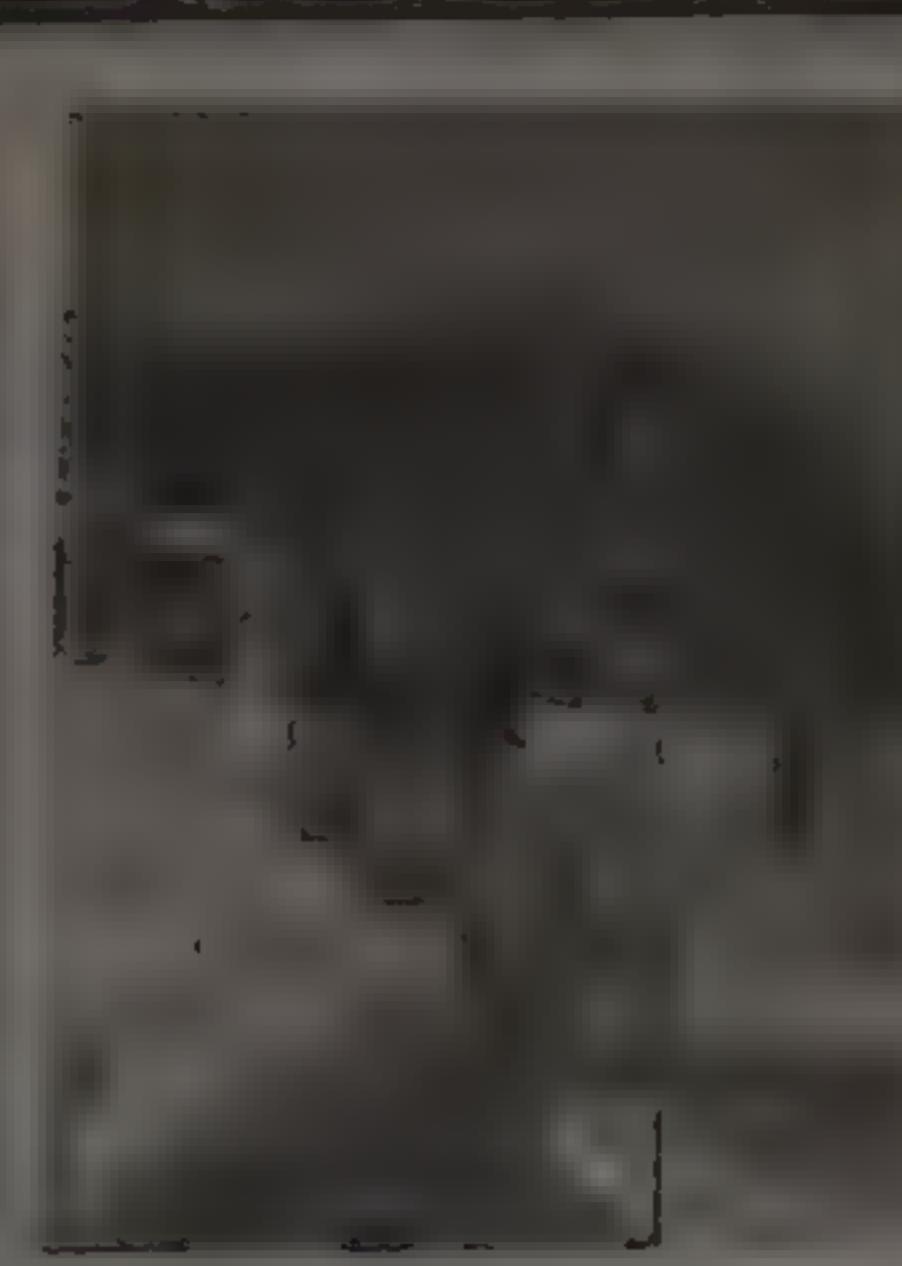
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BY HART GOLBECK

Fortress saga continues

Lubricants on the lifts were too dried out and need to be replaced, at least 50 broken water pipes were discovered in the lodge when water finally got turned on and the access road needed a lot of work, but Fortress Mountain finally appears close to opening for the season. The snow keeps coming and the new owners are moving forward with efforts to get the hill open, hopefully by late January.

Snowboarders and helmets

In a 1999 study, the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) concluded that helmet use by skiers and snowboarders could prevent or reduce the severity of 44 per cent of head injuries to adults, and 53 per cent of head injuries to children under the age of 15. The proportion of skiing and snowboarding head injuries is higher in children than in any other age group, and in the past several weeks both Snow Valley and Rabbit Hill have been the sites

of local boarders cracking their noggin. Without steady snowfall the surfaces are quite icy and hard, and when boarders crash with both their feet in fixed bindings, the results aren't always pretty. Buy a helmet. The good ones approved by the CSA are only \$60-100 and they can save your life or at the least keep you from getting a headache. Please remember that once your speed exceeds 60 kilometres per hour, even the helmet may not save you in a big crash.

Fernie and Castle get what's coming

All those "Pray for Snow" parties are finally paying off, as the snowbelt has reached Fernie, and even Castle Mountain at nearby Pincher Creek is getting into the act. After temporarily closing over New Year's, the recent nightly 20-centimetre dumps have turned their fortunes dramatically. They've had 110 centimetres in the last week, and snow crews are busy once again.

Fernie received 119 centimetres in the past week, and they have had to close several bowls because of too much snow. Just over a week ago, the slopes could take no more and a natural avalanche triggered in an out of bounds area swept onto a run where four skiers were making turns. The skiers weren't totally buried or seriously hurt but needed to be rescued by ski patrollers and then transferred to the local hospital for observation. Avalanche crews at Fernie continue to watch conditions closely. ☀

by only to check on our meals and bring a refill of stout.

While I was eating, I even forgot about my stiffening muscles that I'd be punishing once more on the slopes tomorrow. Filled with bison, we boxed up the remainder of the hush puppies (they made a great breakfast snack the next day), and settled a tab that, drinks included, still ran us less than \$50. ☀

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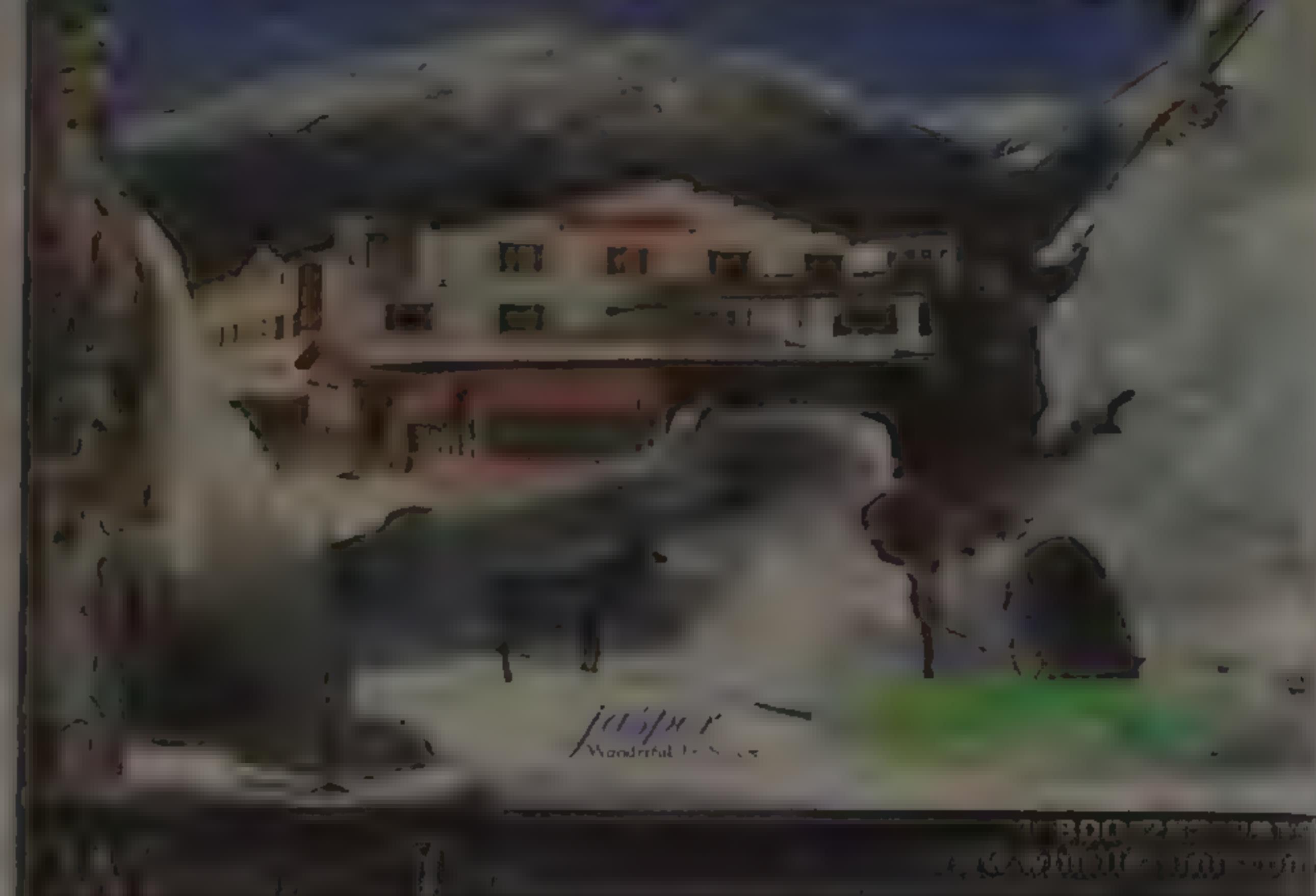
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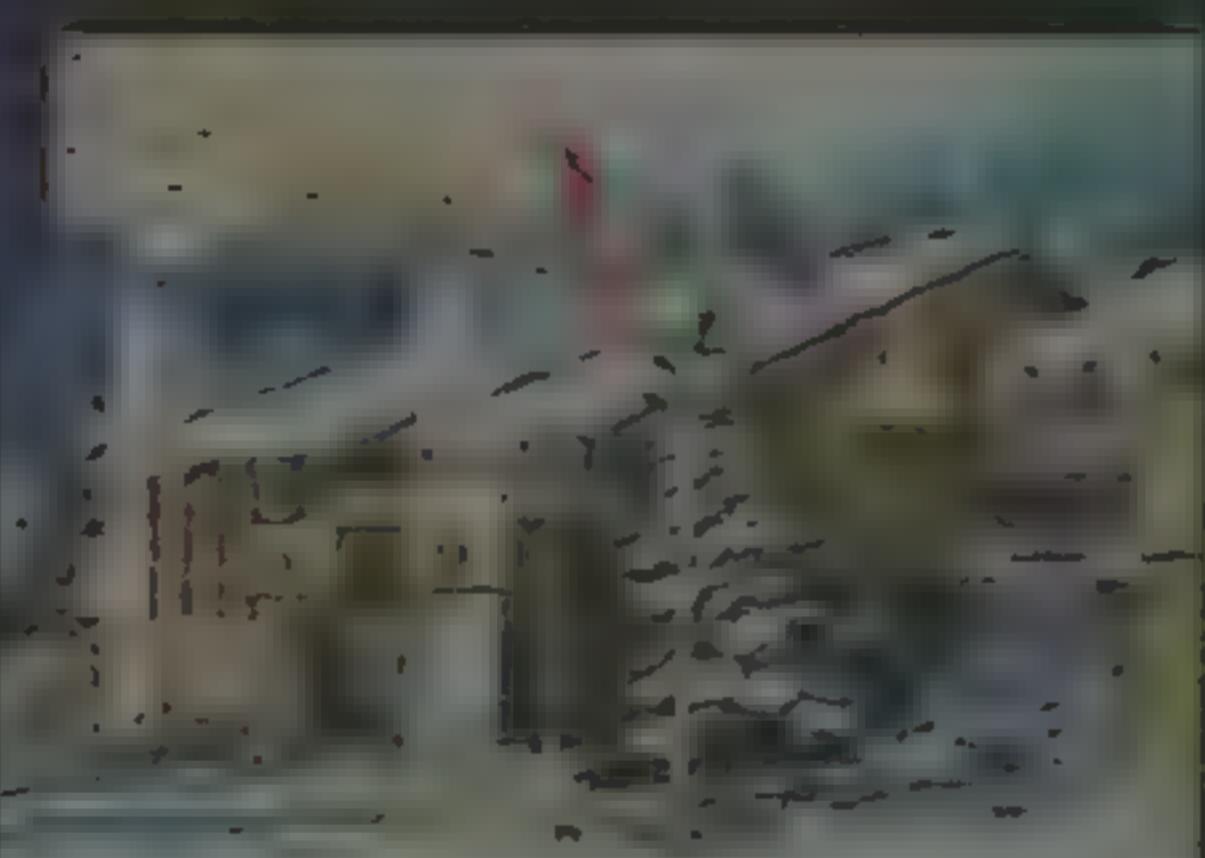
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Continued from page 17

I asked Ellen about how the snowmaking development was shaping up. He explained that they're about to totally revamp the water lagoons by the lower chalet, designing one to hold 3,000,000 gallons of fresh water for snowmaking. Eventually, according to Ellen, they hope to expand the snowmaking operation beyond the lower part of the resort to other sections of the mountain.

Next, my friend and I cruised over to the Nancy Green Provincial Finals to see the nine- and 10-year-olds, and Ellen asked the coaches and volunteers if everything was going okay and if there was anything they needed. Talk about service. On our next ride up I asked Ellen about Dave Gibson, the ski area manager, and how he's fitting into the mold created by the resort's new consortium of owners.

"Dave is the most hands-on manager out there," Ellen explains. "When we had a surveying group in to plant GPS probes for a future lift development, Dave climbed the highest peak in the area and was digging a six-foot hole to put the probe in. Dave already has 40 or 50 days of skiing in this season. I see him in the rental shop, parking lots, and all over the mountain."

I LOOKED OVER TOWARDS the Knob Chair and realized they were loading patrons. It was 11:15 a.m. by this point, so I bid Rob a quick goodbye to take a hit straight down Knob Hill. What was unskiable a few days ago had turned into pure powder. Then it happened: I hit the mother of all rocks and my skis stopped dead. My right ski stuck hard and I flipped over and completed a one-and-a-half before I landed. God bless my helmet. It cracked hard on another rock and put a good dent in it, and I'm sure

without its protection I would have been injured. Badly. But after a quick look at my bases I was off again for one drop into the chutes. It was worth it, although they were a little narrower than usual so my turns needed to be quick and sharp.

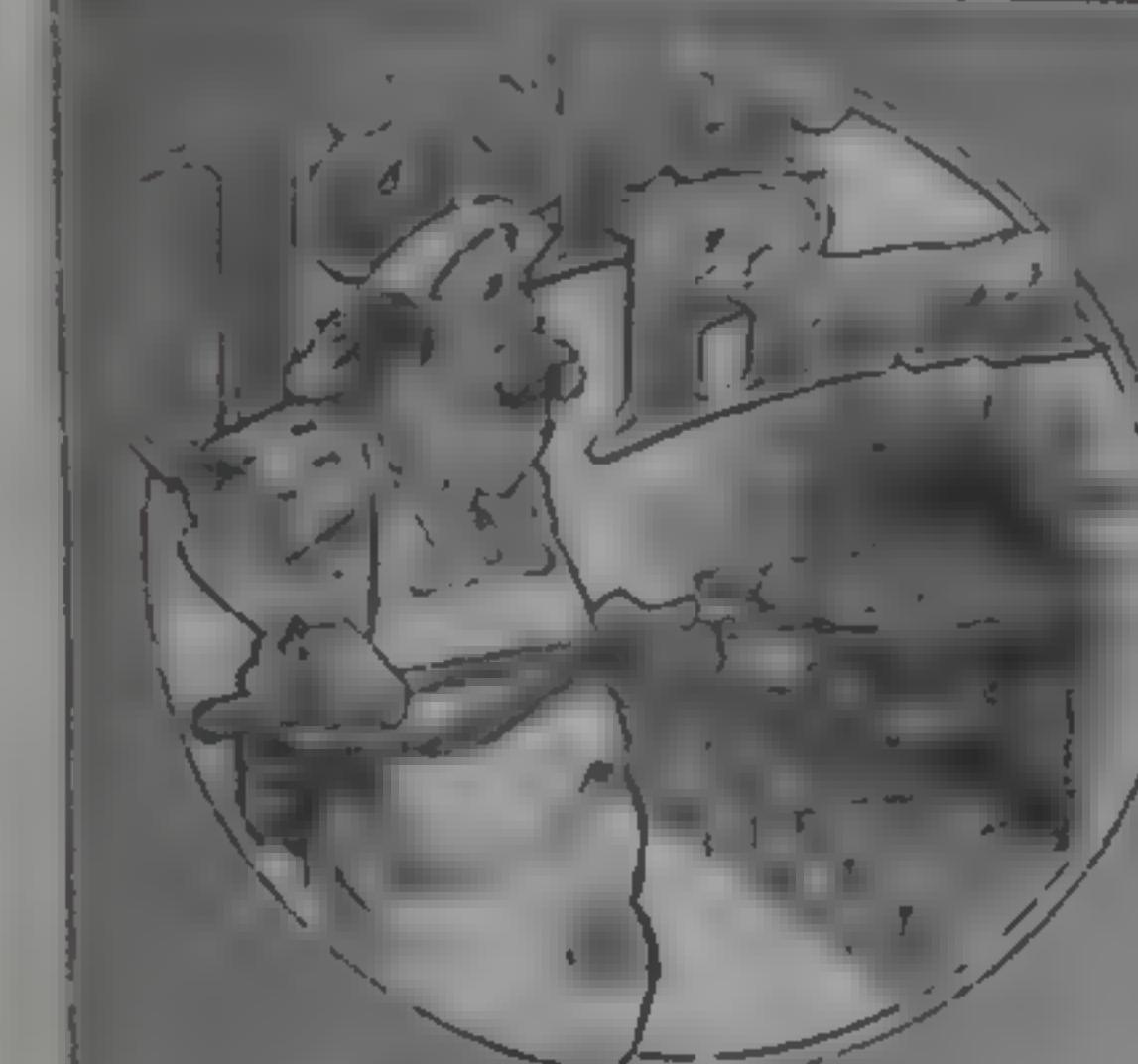
I finished off Saturday covering every bit of the mountain in order to bring a well-rounded report back. Parts of the resort are a little patchy, but overall it's in great shape. There were only maybe a couple thousand people there on Saturday, and about the same on Sunday, and lift lines were virtually non-existent.

I quizzed Gibson about this recent week's snowfall, asking if it was a "million-dollar dump." "More like two million," he smiled. It's about damn time. They really deserved this new snow. Marmot continues to please thousands of people every week; it's just a little easier to do when everything is fully covered in white. ☐

Jasper Pages

Jasper

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The EasyRider Condition Report

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LOCAL

Rabbit Hill - 60cm base, terrain park open

Snow Valley - 60cm base, 100% open

ALBERTA

Castie Mtn - 53 - 187cm base, 54 runs open

Can. Olympic Park - 85cm base, all lifts and runs open

Fortress - 2cm new snow, 50 - 110cm, opening TBA

Lake Louise - 145 - 180cm base, 10 lifts and 111 runs open

Marmot Basin - 76cm base, all main lifts and 67 runs open

Mt. Norquay - 56cm base, 4 lifts and 18 runs open, night skiing every Friday

Nakiska - 32 - 62cm base, 5 lifts and 25 runs open, Ladies Day Friday 19th

Pass Powderkeg - 4cm new snow, 77cm base, 3 lifts and all lower runs open

Sunshine - 3cm new snow, 167cm base, 12 lifts and 102 runs open

Tewatinaw - 2cm new snow, good conditions, open sat & sun

B.C.

Apex - 2cm new snow, 138cm base, 3 lifts and 67 runs open

Big White - 5cm new snow, 218cm base, 15 lifts and 18 runs

Fairmont - very good base and conditions, machine groomed runs

Fernie - 310cm base, 9 lifts and 93 runs open, terrain park closed

Kicking Horse - 6cm new snow, 137cm base, 103 runs open

Kimberley - 17cm new snow, 126cm base, 6 lifts and 75 runs

Mt. Washington - 4cm new snow, 335cm base, 100% open

Panorama - 10cm new snow, 114cm base, 100% open

Powder King - 40cm new snow, 140-200cm base

Powder Springs - 5cm new snow, 65cm base

Red Mtn - 10cm new snow, 228cm base, 6 lifts open

Silver Star - 2cm new snow, 184cm base, 11 lifts and 110 runs open

Sun Peaks - 139cm base, 11 lifts and 117 runs open, 100% open

Whistler Blackcomb - 3cm new snow, 235cm base, terrain parks open

Whitewater - 9cm new snow, 266cm base

USA

Big Mtn - 18cm new snow, 117 - 262cm base, 7 lifts and 93 runs open

Big Sky - 2cm new snow, 130 - 187cm base, all lifts operating

Crystal Mtn - 15cm new snow, 150cm base, 44 runs and 5 lifts, 96% open

49 Degrees - 15cm new snow, 137 - 285cm base, 100% open

Great Divide Ski Area - 7cm new snow, 50 - 75cm base

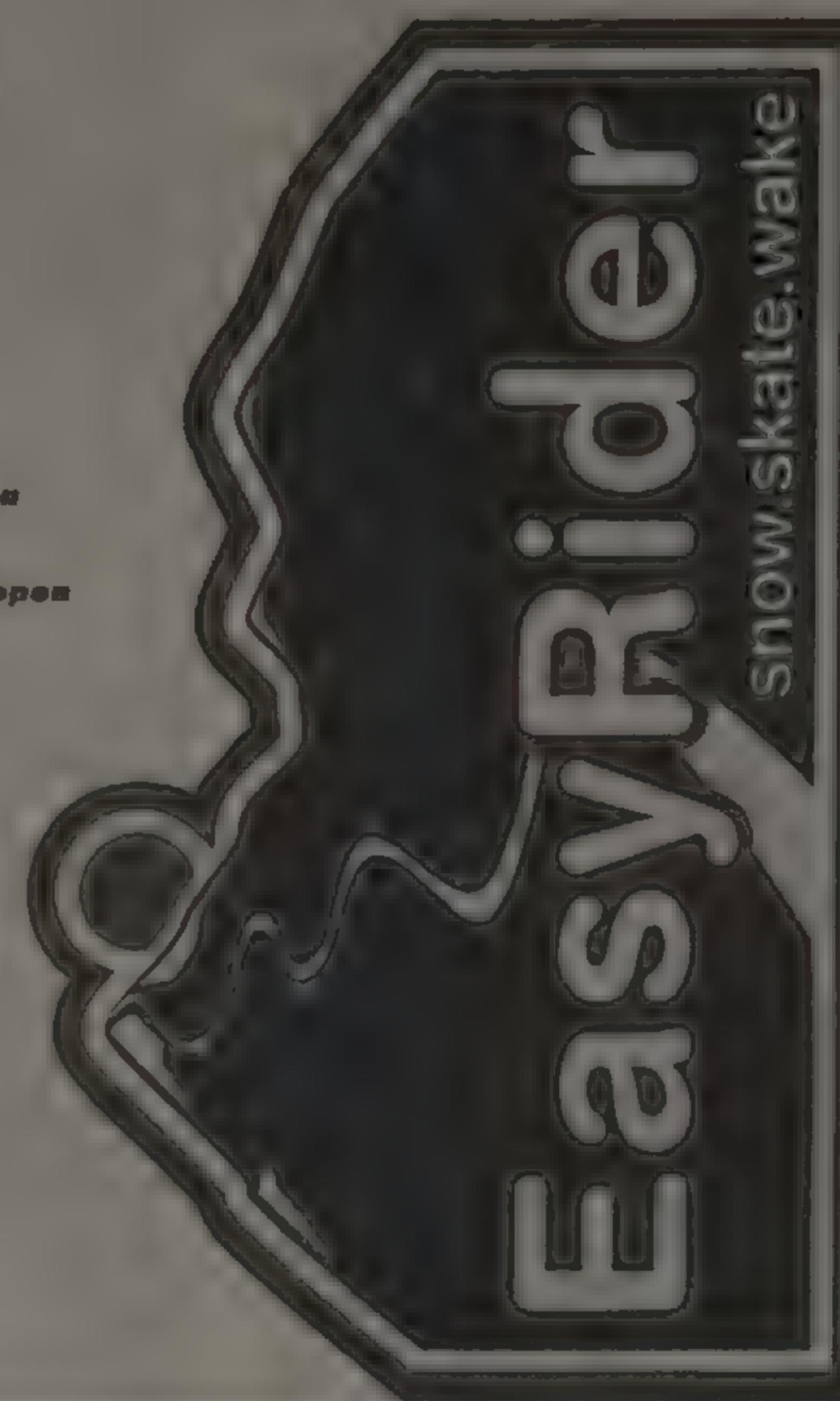
Lookout Pass - 17cm new snow, 172cm base, 100% open

Mt. Spokane - 22cm new snow, 140 - 257cm base, 4 lifts and 44 runs

Schweitzer Mtn - 165 - 232cm base

Silver Mtn - 45cm new snow, 140 - 207cm base

Sun Valley - 20cm new snow, 147 - 260cm base



SnowZone

JASPER IN JANUARY 2006

CALENDAR

DAILY ACTIVITIES

Downhill Skiing

at Marmot Basin

Cross-Country Skiing

anywhere in Jasper

Ice Skating

on Pyramid Lake, Lac Beauvert and Mildred Lake

Canyon Icewalks

through the suspended, frozen waterfalls of Maligne Canyon

Sleigh Rides

at Pyramid Riding Stables and Jasper Park Lodge

Snowshoeing

walking in a winter wonderland...the old fashioned way

Wildlife Searches

take a tour guide with an interpretive guide

Ice Climbing

in Maligne Canyon...with a guide

Dogsledding

a fun winter adventure for everyone

Swimming

indoors, of course, at the Jasper Aquatic Centre

Movies

catch a show at the Chaba Theatre

Jasper Yellowhead Museum & Archives

take some time and learn more about Jasper

Snowmobiling

in nearby Hinton and Valemount (transportation provided)

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LOOK TO
SnowZone in VUEWEEKLY
Sunshine & Harper Mtn.

Stagger lines

Vue's unofficial guide to partying in Jasper

BY HART GOLBECK

Cheap hotels, discounted lift tickets and free (or almost free) seasonal activities aren't the only draw in town during Jasper in January; although the sleepy winter village isn't known for its killer nightlife, there are times when the action picks up and clubs rock into the wee hours. Where and when you party during Jasper in January really only depends on your own stamina. After a wild day on the slopes, if you don't require immediate hot tub intervention, the **De'd Dog Pub** and **Whistle Stop Pub** are a sure bet for cheap beer and good times in the early hours of the evening. The **De'd Dog** is a gathering spot for veteran hill operators, experienced skiers and snowboarding pioneers—not an old crowd, but definitely a bit seasoned. Crowds here tend to thin out pretty soon after happy hour (5-7 p.m.). The

atmosphere at the **Stop** is a bit more intimate, although live music or open-mic nights occasionally get things jumping. Although a favourite for locals, guests are welcome and it's easy to make friends. This is true of most places in Jasper, but especially true of the **Stop**.

The **Downstream Bar** was the first in town to go smoke-free, but with Jasper's new non-smoking bylaw for all bars and restaurants, they are really thriving. Highlights are 35-cent wings on Wednesdays, weekly live bands and an open-mic jam session Sunday evenings. On show nights it's wise to arrive early, as it can be tough to find a seat. Around the corner at the **Atha-B Pub** the action starts a little later. Live bands frequent here on weekends, DJs during the week. Locals flock here Sunday nights for industry specials.

The last of the big five is **Pete's Club**, which is definitely the place to go if you're up for a high-energy evening. Ladies' night features \$3 shooters and \$2 highballs, among

PARTYING

other specials. Don't come early, though, because doors don't open until 8 p.m. There are of course a number of lounges located in their respective hotels for a quieter

nightcap.

If after all this activity you sleep in and are looking for an alternative to Marmot Basin, there are a few things to keep you going. Aside from the downtown shopping there are Maligne Canyon crawls, snowmobile tours, dog sledding adventures, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing and wildlife searches. Just pick up one of the many brochures at your hotel. If you're into the arts, the Jasper Yellowhead Museum and Archives both make a

worthwhile stop. Relatively new to the area, the Jasper Artists' Guild will be featuring their 2006 showcase for the next several months. Each show begins with a Friday night Gala so you'll want to check their web page at www.jasperartists-guild.com for timing and upcoming artists.

It's also true what they say about small towns: it's all in stumbling distance. Just be sure to mind your manners around any elk herds you might come across. ☺

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Assassination tango

Pierce Brosnan is a dissolute hitman going loco in Mexico City in *The Matador*

By PAUL MATWYCHUK

Isn't it strange how, even though Pierce Brosnan was touted through much of the '80s and '90s as the perfect man to play James Bond, when he actually assumed the role in 1995 with *GoldenEye*, he failed to put much of a personal stamp on it? Brosnan's Bond films were the biggest moneymakers of the entire franchise,

but I can't remember a single detail of his work in any of them—just a vague recollection of a series of flawless tuxedos and third-rate sexual innuendoes. The only virtue of Brosnan's work as James Bond was the way that iconic role provided a juicy subtext to his much more interesting

REVUE BLACK COMEDY

work in movies like *The Tailor of Panama* and the surprisingly enjoyable and skillful new comedy *The Matador*. In these movies, Brosnan shows us the flipside of the Bond lifestyle: his characters aren't ladies' men but pathetic, aging skirt-chasers;

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not connoisseurs of fine wines and spirits but alcoholics; not jet-setting playboys but lonely old men wasting their lives in bars and hotel rooms; not glamourous international hitmen but psychopaths.

In *The Matador*, Brosnan plays a contract killer named Julian Noble, but there's little that's noble about him or his work, which these days consists mostly of what he calls "corporate gigs"—flying into exotic cities, knocking off inconvenient business rivals for anonymous clients, unwinding at the local brothels and bars and then waiting for his handler to give him his next assignment. Except lately he's been getting sloppy; maybe he's just been drinking too much or maybe his conscience is finally catching up with him, but he's finding it increasingly hard to perform, and he knows that if he bungles one more job, his bosses will have him rubbed out.

And so, Julian is in a very fragile state of mind the night he happens to run into a straitlaced businessman named Danny Wright (Greg Kinnear) at a lonely bar in Mexico City. It suddenly hits Julian that he doesn't

have any friends at all, and so he ingratiate himself, somewhat overbearingly, into Danny's life—buying him drinks, commiserating with him over the unfairness of the world, taking him to see a bullfight and very gradually confessing to him just what it is he does for a living. Danny's reaction is more titillated than frightened, and after sharing a minor adventure with Julian, he flies home to Denver feeling like he's walked a little on the wild side and gained a hell of a story to tell his wife Bean (Hope Davis). Little does he realize that a few months later, a fugitive Julian will show up on his doorstep, asking Danny to do him a gigantic favour.

RIGHT FROM the opening credits—slow-motion footage of a bullfight set to the Jam's "A Town Called Malice"—writer/director Richard Shepard confidently sets the film's mood: bright colours, stylish photography, a slightly ironic attitude toward violence that never spills over into Tarantino-esque cynicism. In fact, one of the most appealing things about *The Matador* is its complete

absence of cynicism—for a movie about an alcoholic assassin, it's actually pretty heartwarming. Shepard doesn't play the relationship between Julian and Danny for sitcom, odd-couple laughs (like, say, *The Whole Nine Yards*); he presents these characters as two men with real pain and real sadness in their lives, and who take big risks in order to help each other out of it. (There are also some unexpectedly lovely and mature scenes between Danny and Bean; it's the rare thriller in which a married couple makes a point of not keeping any secrets from each other.)

Add in a smart, cleverly structured script that keeps surprising you without relying on ludicrous, artificial "twists" and you've got a small gem of a movie that ought to take Shepard, an obscure director who's been making movies for 17 years now, and finally put him on the map. No bull. \heartsuit

THE MATADOR

Written and directed by Richard Shepard
• Starring Pierce Brosnan, Greg Kinnear and Hope Davis • Opens Fri, Jan 20

A rambling man

Musician Jim White guides a tour of the poor, rural American South in *Searching for the Wrong-Eyed Jesus*

By BRIAN GIBSON

The camera glides through the bayou, prismatic rays of sun glinting through trees standing up out of the still, green water. There's a dog running alongside on the bank and a lilting, melancholy song in the background, while the fecund, half-underwater world spreads out around us. This is the welcome to the South that *Searching For The Wrong-Eyed Jesus*

extends. We're on a tour led by musician Jim White, driving a paint-patched, '70s Chevy (complete with a concrete statue of Jesus in the trunk) off the interstate and into the rusting-out, roughed-up worlds of cut-and-shoot bars, muffler shops, strip joints, Pentecostal churches, and the white rural poor.

On these musing meanderings and ruminating ramblings, White

REVUE DOCUMENTARY

and others offer their lyrical observations on life below the Mason-Dixon line, where "you feel like there's a blanket over the whole world" and folks' songs and stories are a "way of saying who they were in the world." Jim, his hands on the chipped steering wheel, a wristwatch looped around it to keep the time, passes

derelict buses, mobile homes, and roadside dives. Another musician asks Jim, "What're you doin'?" "Killin' time," he replies. "But it won't die." A man passes by and explains how older Southerners read the Sears Roebuck mail catalogue. A local biker off-handedly notes, "Every town needs a bad guy," then takes a few more pot-shots at a stop sign before revving off.

And there is always music, haunting strains of it wafting through the picture. A sad-looking woman plays on a saw with a bow. A man strums a tune on his banjo for a kid in the woods with his bike. A drowsy, droll ditty crooned on the road fades into a ballad about robbery and murder sung in a barbershop.

THE FIRST HALF of *Searching For The Wrong-Eyed Jesus* thrives on a lush tumble of poetic images, moody

Gender bender

Duncan Tucker's *Transamerica* revs up the road-trip film while exploring sexual identity

BY BRIAN GIBSON

"A pre-op transsexual drives across the country with the drug-addict, street-hustling son s/he never knew s/he had" may sound like a lurid sub-headline you'd run across while flipping through the tabloids at the supermarket checkout. But really, it's the plot of an ostensibly Sundance quirky movie by Duncan Tucker, and *Transamerica* turns out to be an unassuming, charmingly low-key film that, while sparking some new life into the stalling engine of the nearly exhausted road-trip genre, offers a touching portrait of a world

where everyone's a little bit born again and a little bit lost. With its sharp dialogue ("It's like you put yourself through a strainer and got rid of all the boy pulp") and rough-edged characters, *Transamerica* affectingly re-examines our uneasy expectations about identity, family, and gender.

Born as Stanley Osbourne, Bree (Felicity Huffman) is only a few

weeks away from a doctor-approved, therapist-sanctioned sex-change operation which, after hormone treatments and voice-altering sessions, will make Stanley the Sabrina Claire Osbourne he's long wished to be. Then, in the midst of her second job as a telemarketer, Bree gets a telephone call about the jailed son who was, apparently, the result of Stanley's sole sexual encounter with a woman. Bree's therapist (Elizabeth

Peña) refuses to sign off on the operation unless her patient deals with this remnant from her male past, and so Bree flies to New York to bail out Toby (Kevin Zegers).

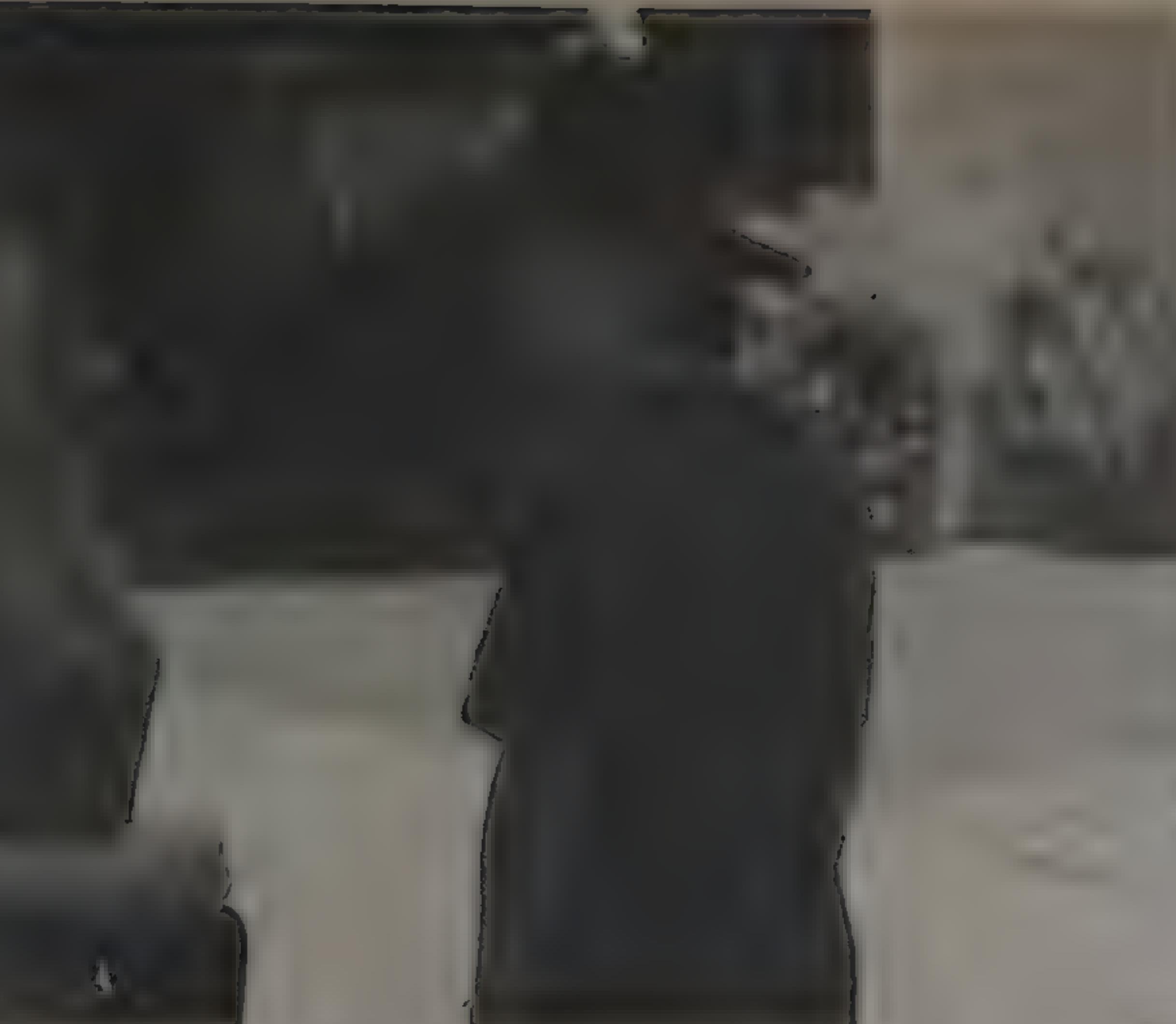
TUCKER'S FIRST ingenious touch is to make the film's protagonist, in many ways, its least troubled, confused soul. Although Bree immediately lies to Toby, telling him that she is a church worker, she remains confused and angry about being a parent to a child she never knew she had, not about her gender. Toby, meanwhile, is a mess. He grew up in a broken, abusive home in Kentucky after his mother killed herself and has run away to New York, earning cash as a male prostitute and snorting coke in his spare time. His big, sad dream is to go to Los Angeles, find his dad and work in the gay porn industry.

Tucker's second touch is to avoid ever making judgements about, or letting the viewer mock or criticize,

tunes, and offbeat moments, but the film starts to become bogged down in its insistence on the South as a land of extremes, of either believers or sinners, the saved or the forsaken. People cry and shake at a Pentecostal church on Sunday morning, sweating, sobbing, and babbling in tongues as they cast their arms heavenwards. A woman preaches on the local radio, or a church minister leads his band in a rock 'n' roll number for the congregation. This is a land of Old Testament religion, where people speak of hellfire and eternal damnation and the rapture, not the humility and sacrifice of Christ or the socialism suggested in the New Testament.

But the stories, usually told by white men, grow banal, and the richness of White's world increasingly seems limited in scope. Are there no African-American rural poor in the South? Jesus may be wrong-eyed, but *Searching For The Wrong-Eyed Jesus* seems racially myopic. And at times, Andrew Douglas's film seems like a music showcase masquerading as a

travelogue.

And yet, in its own small, strange, snaking way, the film—from its oversights and narrowing horizons to its eclectic moments of connection with the dispossessed and drifting—is still often as alluring and elusive as the South it tries to find. 

SEARCHING FOR THE WRONG-EYED JESUS

Directed by Andrew Douglas • Starring Jim White, Johnny Dowd, The Handsome Family, and other Southern musicians • Metro Cinema • Fri, Jan 20 & Sun, Jan 22 (7 pm) • 425-9212

Bree and Toby. A lesser film would have capped off the plot with a happy ending or had Bree or Toby find some sort of salvation, but Tucker never resorts to the easy Hollywood treatment.

So near-woman and reluctant parent meets her unaware son, a young quasi-man who lies about his addiction and escapes his pain by hopping into bed with pretty much anyone. The pair, driving through the South, discover each other's painful secrets and Tucker reveals the nation's states of flux. While some of the episodes en route don't hang together (such as the sputtering scenes with a part-Native cowboy), the basic tension between the androgynously named Bree and Toby drives *Transamerica* most of the way home.

When Bree and Toby turn up at Bree's parents' home in Phoenix, the Irish-born Fionnula Flanagan transforms herself into a super-tanned, Barbara Bush-like desperate housewife. As Bree's father recedes into the background, we see the

fussiness and pedantry that Bree's overbearing mother (also popping hormone pills, post-menopause) has passed on to her.

Huffman plays Bree as a waveringly husky-voiced, uptight woman a compelling performance that's nicely countered by Zegers's simpler turn as a lank-haired, sullen, lost boy. Bree—with her over-application of pancake makeup to make herself look like a slightly stiff, waxen creature, her swinging walk still a little awkward, her pink nails tapping nervously—teeters on the edge of loneliness, anxious to reveal herself to people who will truly understand. Thanks to Tucker's raw, honest writing and direction, we not only see Bree for who she really is, but catch a revealing glimpse of our own presumptions, yearnings and worries up there on the screen, reflected back at us. 

TRANSAMERICA

Written and directed by Duncan Tucker • Starring Felicity Huffman, Kevin Zegers, and Elizabeth Peña • Opens Fri, Jan 20

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Trading places

Jack Nicholson's character in *The Passenger* discovers that you can't escape from yourself

BY JOSEF BRAUN

1 1973. A white journalist alternately stumbles and drives through some vast desert in war-torn Chad. He distributes cigarettes to cool, unreceptive locals in exchange for nothing. His Land Rover overheats, gurgling desperately in its death throes before it simply sinks into the sand. The blue of the truck nearly disappears into the uniform blue of the sky and

the undulating sands that comprise every surrounding corner of visible earth seem to terrifyingly reflect the inner emptiness that haunts him. With these opening scenes of *The Passenger*, widely regarded as his last great film, Michelangelo Antonioni had clearly found his ideal canvas, the definitive landscape of the

REVUE CLASSIC

(Western) human soul in perdition.

Originally released in 1975, *The Passenger*, a film about disappearances and lingering ghosts, itself disappeared for the last 20 years when it was pulled from circulation, only appearing in a poorly transferred pan-and-scan VHS copy that went

out of print in 1992. Why the film has so long been in limbo I'm not certain, but its star Jack Nicholson, who rightly considers it one of his finest films, now owns the rights and has orchestrated the restoration and re-release of one of its three versions, a 123-minute cut including key scenes deleted from the original North American release. The life of this enigmatic film mirrors those of its characters, but it's back, and this is cause for celebration.

What begins like a Paul Bowles story, a "Distant Episode" of the Western psyche defeated in confrontation with a more primitive, specifically Muslim, world, slowly transforms into something more footloose in its fatalism, more in keeping with the budding age of globalization. David Locke (Nicholson) returns from the desert to the desolate hotel where he's one of two guests. The other is travelling businessman David Robertson, another white foreigner of the same approximate age and physical type as Locke. But upon returning, Locke is the first to discover that Robertson has, so to speak, checked out. One of the strangest, most compelling moments in *The Passenger* occurs while Locke quietly hovers closely over Robertson's corpse, staring into it, brushing a wayward hair aside as it drifts under the ceiling fan. What does Locke see in those eyes? Namely, an opportunity, a skin he can step into and leave his own behind: the profession he

doesn't believe in, a lifeless marriage, a home that this instinctive nomad feels little attachment to.

THE FIRST ACT of *The Passenger* attains a kind of perfection in eloquence, mystery and wonder, and Nicholson effortlessly embodies the pervasive spiritual unease. Where it goes is the result of Antonioni's wild gamble in taking up the first act's challenge to follow this crazy story through. By the time we reach the astonishing seven-minute unbroken, moving shot that assembles nearly all the film's characters and fulfills its inevitable resolution, there is an uncanny sense of things truly coming full circle in more ways than one. As the action moves through England, Germany and Spain (an appropriate locale for its Hemingway-esque denouement), flashes of a Hitchcockian "wrong man" thriller playfully come and go, and a spunky

young companion (Maria Schneider) is introduced. Locke initially finds that moving from one identity to another is easy—whether "playing journalist or arms dealer, he need only fulfil people's expectations. Yet at heart, an old-fashioned moral infuses *The Passenger*: you can't run away from yourself, from whatever dates with destiny you adopt, steal, arrange or simply blindly hurtle toward. And aside from the many political undertones that renew *The Passenger* for a new contemporary audience, there is also a coincidence that makes Locke's date with destiny carry a special, ghastly resonance that is September 11. v

THE PASSENGER

Directed by Michelangelo Antonioni • Written by Mark Peploe, Peter Wollen and Antonioni • Starring Jack Nicholson and Maria Schneider • Metro Cinema • Fri-Mon, Jan 20-23 (9 pm) • 425-9212

Criminal Barbie

Laura Prepon's portrayal of *Karla* seems too pretty for the notorious criminal

BY BRIAN GIBSON

So, here it is: after a reviled plea bargain, a relationship with a murderer behind bars, a secret release from jail, an interview on Radio Canada, the lifting of all legal restrictions on her movements in November and countless denunciations of the long-planned film about the most notorious veterinary assistant in Canada.... *Karla*, the movie, has arrived.

Here are the grainy, videotaped echoes of three brutal murders and faithful imitations of now-infamous snapshots of a murderous couple living in apparent bliss in the early '90s (although, in two lapses of accuracy, the *Toronto Sun* appears as a stately broadsheet and the U.S.-Canada border crossing resembles a rural road drunk-driving checkpoint). Yet there is little ambiguity or tension at the

core of this basically hollow karaoke version of the Bernardo-Homolka murders. Joel Bender's movie never resorts to gore-porn or sleaze-sation-

REVUE TRUE CRIME

alism, avoiding any shots of Kristen French and Leslie Mahaffy (given different names here) being beaten or raped, and the simulations of

Bernardo's horrific films offer no flashes of nudity that would make us feel complicit with the sexual predator. But *Karla* seldom probes its title character's own complicity.

From the start, where *Karla* (Laura Prepon) willingly traces her abusive marriage for a psychiatrist (Patrick Bauchau), *Karla* pushes the battered-spouse-went-along-with-



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DIRECTED BY SCOTT DALTON & MARGARITA MARTINEZ

January 26 at 7:00pm at Metro Cinema

Citadel Theatre Complex (9828-101A Avenue).

\$8.00 for adults and \$6.00 seniors/students

More than 30,000 people have been killed over the last ten years in Colombia's bloody civil conflict, in which left-wing guerrillas fight against the government and illegal right-wing paramilitary groups. Recently, as guerrillas and paramilitaries sought to control marginal city neighborhoods, urban gangs aligned themselves with each side. In this way, the national conflict was translated into a brutal turf war that pitted adjacent barrios against each other. The documentary *La Sierra* explores life over the course of a year in one such barrio (La Sierra, in Medellin), through the prism of three young lives.

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Maria Schneider

A Carlo Ponti Production of
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FILM WEEKLY

THIS WEEK'S NEW MOVIES

Best of the Ottawa International Animation Festival A collection of short animation from six countries. Zeidler Hall, The Citadel; Sat, Jan 21 & Mon, Jan 23 (7 pm)

Karla Laura Prepon, Misha Collins and Tess Harper star in *Jennifer is Dead* Director Joel Bender's true crime film about Paul Bernardo and Karla Homolka, who sexually abuse and murder three teenage girls. Read Brian Gibson's review on page 28.

Looking for Comedy in the Muslim World Albert Brooks, Conrad Bachmann and Homie Doroodian star in Brooks's comedy about the U.S. government sending a comedian to India and Pakistan to discern what makes Muslims laugh. Read Carolyn N. Kodym's review on page 30.

The Life and Hard Times of Guy Terrifico Lyriq Bent, Merle Haggard and George Stroumboulopoulos star in first-time feature director Michael Mabbott's mockumentary about the rise and fall of a fake country singer. Read Paul Matwychuk's review on page 32.

The Matador Pierce Brosnan, Greg Kinnear and Hope Davis star in *Oxygen* director Richard Shepherd's film about a travelling salesman and a washed-up hitman who meet in a Mexico City bar and form a lasting friendship. Read Paul Matwychuk's review on page 26.

The New World Colin Farrell, Christian Bale and Q'orianka Kilcher star in *The Thin Red Line* director Terrence Malick's film recounting the classic story of Englishman John Smith and Pocahontas.

The Passenger Jack Nicholson, Jenny Runacre and Ian Hendry star in *Beyond the Clouds* director Michelangelo Antonioni's film about a foreign journalist who assumes the identity of a dead man in the hopes that this new life will be more interesting. Read Josef Braun's review on page 28. Zeidler Hall, The Citadel; Fri-Mon, Jan 20-23 (9 pm)

Searching for the Wrong-Eyed Jesus This documentary by *The Amityville Horror* director Andrew Douglas follows musician Jim White as he explores the American South for music, stories and the meaning of faith. Read Brian Gibson's review on page 26. Zeidler Hall, The Citadel; Fri, Jan 20 & Sun, Jan 22 (7 pm)

Transamerica Felicity Huffman, Kevin Zegers and Fionnula Flanagan star in *Boys to Men* co-director Duncan Tucker's film about a pre-op transsexual who discovers that she fathered a child when she was a man. Read Brian Gibson's review on page 27.

Underworld: Evolution Kate Beckinsale, Scott Speedman and Bill Nighy star in *Underworld* director Len Wiseman's sequel in which a vampire heroine and a werewolf hybrid try to unlock the secrets of their bloodlines, tracing the ancient feud between their tribes to its beginning.

BILM LISTINGS

FRI, JANUARY 20-THU, JANUARY 26, 2006

All showtimes are subject to change at any time. Please contact theatre for confirmation.

CHABA THEATRE - JASPER

6094 Connaught Dr, Jasper, 852-4749

THE RINGER (PG, crude content) Fri Sat 7:00 9:00 Sun-Thu 8:00

FAMILY STONE (PG) Fri Sat 7:00 9:00 Sun-Thu 8:00

CINEMA CITY - EDMONTON 12

Cinema 12: 3633-99 St, 463-5481

KISS KISS BANG BANG (14A, violence, coarse language throughout) Sat Sun 11:10 Daily 1:20 3:55 7:25 9:30 Fri Sat late show 12:05

WOLF CREEK (18A, brutal violence, disturbing content) Sat Sun 11:05 Daily 2:05 4:35 7:25 9:30 Fri Sat late show 12:00

JUST FRIENDS (14A) Sat Sun 11:30 Daily 2:10 4:25 7:35 10:05 Fri Sat late show 12:30 Kids Kabin Fever: Jan. 26 2:10

GET RICH OR DIE TRYIN' (18A, coarse language, violence) Daily 4:10 9:55 Fri Sat late show 12:15

AEON FLUX (14A) Sat Sun 11:20 Daily 2:00 4:55 7:30 10:00 Fri Sat late show 12:25

DERAILED (14A, violence, coarse language throughout) Sat Sun 10:55 Daily 1:25 4:00 6:55 9:45 Fri Sat late show 12:20

JARHEAD (18A, coarse language, sexual content) Sat Sun 10:55 Daily 1:35 4:15 6:50 9:25 Fri Sat late show 12:00

YOURS, MINE AND OURS (G) Sat Sun 11:30 Daily 1:50 4:20 7:20 9:20 Fri Sat late show 11:30

THE LEGEND OF ZORRO (PG, violence) Sat Sun 11:00 Daily 1:40 4:15 7:00 9:40 Fri Sat late show 12:10

DREAMER: INSPIRED BY A TRUE STORY (G) Sat Sun 11:15 Daily 1:45 3:30 7:15 9:35 Fri Sat late show 11:40

ZATHURA (PG, may frighten young children) Sat Sun 11:25 Daily 1:30 7:10

WALLACE AND GROMIT: THE CURSE OF THE WERE-RABBIT (G) Sat Sun 11:35 Daily 1:55 4:40 7:15

THE CONSTANT GARDENER (14A, coarse language, mature theme) Sat Sun 10:50 Daily 1:25 4:05 6:50 9:40 Fri Sat late show 12:10

FLIGHTPLAN (PG, not recommended for young children) Daily 9:45 Fri Sat late show 11:55

Movies 12: 130 Ave 50 St, 472-9779

THE PRODUCERS (PG, crude content, not recommended for young children) Sat Sun 10:50 Daily 1:25 4:10 6:55 9:45 Fri Sat late show 12:15 Kids Kabin Fever: Jan 26 1:25

KISS KISS BANG BANG (14A, violence, coarse language throughout) Sat Sun 11:15 Daily 1:45 4:35 7:15 9:35 Fri Sat late show 11:50

WOLF CREEK (18A, brutal violence, disturbing content) Sat Sun 11:30 Daily 1:50 4:55 7:35 10:00 Fri Sat late show 12:00

JUST FRIENDS (14A) Sat Sun 11:40 Daily 2:00 5:00 7:45 10:05 Fri Sat late show 12:05

GET RICH OR DIE TRYIN' (18A, coarse language, violence) Sat Sun 11:10 Daily 1:55 4:40 7:20 9:55 Fri Sat late show 12:15

AEON FLUX (14A) Sat Sun 11:25 Daily 2:00 4:50 7:30 9:50 Fri Sat late show 11:55

DERAILED (14A, violence, coarse language throughout) Sat Sun 11:10 Daily 1:40 4:25 7:10 9:40 Fri Sat late show 12:10

JARHEAD (18A, coarse language, sexual content) Daily 4:10 9:55

YOURS, MINE AND OURS (G) Sat Sun 11:35 Daily 2:05 4:30 7:25 9:25 Fri Sat late show 11:25

THE LEGEND OF ZORRO (PG, violence) Sat Sun 11:00 Daily 1:35 4:20 7:05 9:45 Fri Sat late show 12:20

DREAMER: INSPIRED BY A TRUE STORY (G) Sat Sun 11:25 Daily 2:15 7:10

ZATHURA (PG, may frighten young children) Daily 4:40 9:30 Fri Sat late show 11:45

SAW II (18A, gory scenes throughout) Daily 10:10 Fri Sat late show 12:05

WALLACE AND GROMIT: THE CURSE OF THE WERE-RABBIT (G) Sat Sun 11:20 Daily 2:10 4:45 7:00

FLIGHTPLAN (PG, not recommended for young children) Sat Sun 11:05 Daily 1:30 7:40 Fri Sat late show 12:25

CITY CENTRE

10200-102 Ave 421-7020

MEMOIRS OF A GEISHA (PG, mature themes, not recommended for young children, SR Dolby Digital) Daily 12:00 3:10 6:30 9:40

BROKEBACK MOUNTAIN (14A, mature themes, sexual content, SR Dolby Digital) Daily 12:10 3:30 6:45 9:45

HOSTEL (18A, explicit violence, disturbing content, sexual content, DTS Digital) Daily 12:25 2:45 5:05 7:20 9:45

TRISTAN AND ISOLDE (14A, DTS Digital) Daily 12:30 3:15 6:35 9:20

MRS. HENDERSON PRESENTS (14A, nudity, DTS Digital) Daily 1:10 4:00 6:50 9:30

LAST HOLIDAY (PG, DTS Digital) Daily 1:00 4:10 7:25 10:20

UNDERWORLD: EVOLUTION (18A, gory violence, DTS Stereo Digital) Daily 12:40 3:40 7:10 10:10

THE MATADOR (14A, coarse language, sexual content, Dolby Stereo Digital) Daily 12:50 3:20 7:20 7:30 10:10

THE NEW WORLD (PG, violence, DTS Digital) Daily 12:20 3:50 7:00 10:10

CLAREVIEW

4211-139 Ave, 472-7600

GLORY ROAD (PG) Fri-Sun 1:30 4:00 7:10 9:35 Mon-Thu 4:00 7:10 9:35

LAST HOLIDAY (PG) Fri-Sun 1:20 3:50 6:50 9:20 Mon-Thu 3:50 6:50 9:20

MUNICH (18A, violence) Fri-Sun 1:10 4:30 8:00 Mon-Thu 4:30 8:00

HOODWINKED (G) Fri-Sun 12:35 2:40 4:45 7:00 9:00 Mon-Thu 4:45 7:00 9:00

KING KONG (PG, frightening scenes, not recommended for young children) Fri-Sun 1:00 4:40 8:30 Mon-Thu 4:40 8:30

BROKEBACK MOUNTAIN (14A, mature themes, sexual content) Fri-Sun 12:40 3:30 6:40 9:30 Mon-Thu 3:30 6:40 9:30

CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN 2 (G) Fri-Sun 2:00 4:50 Mon-Thu 4:50

HOSTEL (18A, explicit violence, disturbing content, sexual content) Daily 7:30 9:50

UNDERWORLD: EVOLUTION (18A, gory violence) Fri-Sun 1:50 4:10 7:20 9:40 Mon-Thu 4:10 7:20 9:40

TRISTAN AND ISOLDE (14A) Daily 6:50 9:15 Sat-Sun 1:55

CHRONICLES OF NARNIA: THE LION, THE WITCH AND THE WARDROBE (PG, may frighten young children) Daily 6:30 9:30 10:30

THE RINGER (PG, crude content) Daily 7:10 9:20 Sat-Sun 1:10 3:20

PRINCESS (PG) Daily 10:30 12:30 2:30 4:30 6:30 8:30

WALK THE LINE (PG, mature theme, not recommended for young children) Daily 7:00 9:30 Sun 2:00

HOODWINKED (G) Daily 7:05 9:00 Sat-Sun 2:10 4:10

TRISTAN AND ISOLDE (14A) Daily 6:50 9:15 Sat-Sun 1:55

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HOODWINKED (G) Daily 7:05 9:00 Sat-Sun 2:10 4:10

TRISTAN AND ISOLDE (14A) Daily 6:50 9:15 Sat-Sun 1:55

CHRONICLES OF NARNIA: THE LION, THE WITCH AND THE WARDROBE (PG, may frighten young children) Daily 6:30 9:30 10:30

The Gram Parsons project

Uninspired Guy Terrifco attempts to add fictitious singer to '70s country-rock pantheon

BY PAUL MATWYCHUK

The *Life and Hard Times of Guy Terrifco* contains a lot of fantastic footage of the "outlaw country" movement of the '70s: there's Merle Haggard complaining about the glossy Nashville hitmaking machine on some TV talk show; there's Kris Kristofferson, awkward and half-drunk, accepting his award from Roy Clark for Song of the Year for "Sunday Mornin' Comin' Down" at the Country Music Association Awards; there's Kristofferson, awkward and half-drunk again, performing for tens of thousands of people at the Isle of Wight Festival. Kristofferson and Haggard show up in contemporary footage, too, as do guys like Donnie Fritts, Ronnie Hawkins and Levon Helm; something about their relaxed posture, their rich, laconic speaking voices, their mere presence, just exudes the authority and experience that has always been

part of the best country music. It's all enough to make you wish you were watching an actual documentary about them instead of a repetitive, phony documentary about a fictitious, hard-drinking country/rock superstar named Guy Terrifco.

Matt Murphy (a member of Halifax rock bands like the Flashing Lights and the Super Friendz) plays Terrifco, who we're told began life as a skinny kid from northern Alberta named Jim Jablowski. Bitten by the music bug after receiving a Sears-issue acoustic

REVUE **MOCKUMENTARY**

guitar from his dad for Christmas, Jablowski left the farm and began traveling North America, first achieving prominence as a self-mythologizing Bob Dylan-style folk singer in Greenwich Village and then, back in Canada again, as a Gram Parsons-style country/rock visionary. (His new name came to him after he woke up from a concussion during a week-long party celebrating his fluke lottery win. A horse hit him on the head; he never should have brought livestock into his hotel room.) Sadly, Terrifco was always too drunk and disorganized and burnt-out from the road to ever get around to recording an album

before meeting his untimely, violent end.

IT'S UNCLEAR WHAT, exactly, Murphy and writer/director Michael Mabbott hoped to achieve with this film. It's not exactly a spoof, like *Spinal Tap* or *A Mighty Wind*, although Mabbott does make the occasional stab at comedy, as when a bad case of stage fright

causes Terrifco's wife Mary Lou to begin farting uncontrollably during her first gig. (There's also a series of deadeningly unfunny interviews with one of Terrifco's female backup singers, a grotesque trailer-trash caricature who says "fuck" five times in every sentence.) The story isn't dramatized with enough fullness for the film to qualify as a drama. And it isn't exactly an excuse to show off Murphy's retro songwriting skills, either—there's only one performance of an entire song in the whole movie. The whole movie hinges on Terrifco's reputation as a musical genius, but Mabbott cheats and expects us basically to take it all on faith.

If anything, the film just seems

like an elaborate music fantasy camp for Murphy, who gets to dress up in a bunch of Nudie suits, pose for a lot of faux-vintage photos and drunkenly stomp around for the benefit of Mabbott's camera without actually having to act or even sing many songs. (Only Natalie Radford is allowed to deliver a real performance; she brings a textured vulnerability to her scenes as the now-older Mary Lou Terrifco that suggests all the heartache and humanity that's absent from the rest of Mabbott's movie.)

The Life and Hard Times of Guy Terrifco makes me wonder if it's time for Canadian movie directors to retire the mockumentary format for a while. In just a few years, we've

had *The Delicate Art of Parking*, *F.U.B.A.R.*, *Ham and Cheese* and *It's All Gone, Pete Tong* along with countless others and the technique is, quite frankly, starting to look a little lazy. It's a hell of a lot easier, after all, to have an "interviewee" tell you a story than to figure out how to dramatize that story through action and dialogue. Isn't it time for this country's film artists to get real and start writing some scripts again? ☺

THE LIFE AND HARD TIMES OF GUY TERRIFICO

Written and directed by Michael Mabbott • Starring Matt Murphy, Natalie Radford, Kris Kristofferson and Merle Haggard • Opens Fri, Jan 20

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MARTIN LAWRENCE

*The Momma
Jill Comedies
is Back.*

**BIG
MUTHA**
2

IN THEATRES FRIDAY JANUARY 27TH

Karla

Continued from page 28

serial-killer-husband theory. We hardly see the person(as) behind the name, the feelings beneath the face. Maybe reality has outstripped Karla, which rarely transcends the visual or written standards of a TV movie. The Karla Homolka who appeared on Quebec television after she was released last summer—a petite, coy yet hardened woman who was constantly evading responsibility—is never evident in Prepon's performance. In flashbacks, she plays Karla as a buxom, blonde siren and often mute witness, while for the psychiatrist, she never seems hesitant to recall the crimes but isn't eager to pin the blame on Bernardo (Misha Collins).

KARLA OFFERS NO BACKGROUND and scant explanation for why a young, white middle-class woman helped her husband drug, kidnap, rape and kill other young, white middle-class women (one of whom was her own sister). Karla flashes farthest back to the moment she first saw Bernardo, a look reduced to bloodlust at first sight. But was she a sociopathic follower who found her psychopathic leader? There's no Capote-like reporter to reflect and elicit any narcissistic self-justifications and no examination of the media's obsession with the crimes. The closing credits offer factoids and excerpts from the psychiatry report that are far more revealing than any-

thing Karla gives us.

The film does, though, offer some insight into Bernardo, who comes off as a deeply impotent, frustrated male. He never fights his buddies but constantly blames women especially Karla, for his mistakes. Desperate for power and acknowledgement through degradation and punishment, he has Karla call him "King" and makes his victims boast of his sexual prowess. Misha Collins offers a restless, self-hating misogynist who nervously munches popcorn or nuts when he's being questioned by the police.

But only Karla is expressly shown having sex with Bernardo and being hit by him, so she is prioritized as the main victim. That's emphasized in a scene where Karla kneels down next to her husband's first crying captive, suggesting their equality, and then, when the girl asks her, "Why don't you leave him?" she replies, "You don't understand."

No, we don't. Films such as *The Minus Man* and *Dahmer* were slow, cold probes into the dark fog of serial killers' minds. But this film just left me feeling a queasy nothingness as I watched celluloid simulacra of crimes which dominated the headlines as I was growing up in Southern Ontario. *Karla*, and her namesake, are best left to fade into the shadows of obscurity. ☺

KARLA

Directed by Joel Bender • Written by Manette Rosen, Michael D. Sellers, and Joel Bender • Starring Laura Prepon and Misha Collins • Opens Fri, Jan 20



Live... Live!

After 15 years, Live frontman Ed Kowalczyk is still living a music lover's dream

BY ROSS MOROZ

I don't remember much about the summer of 1994. Not that it wasn't a pretty eventful time: the Channel between Britain and France had just been completed; Nelson Mandela had just become the first black president of South Africa; O.J. Simpson's ex-wife had just been murdered by, um... someone. Exciting times, sure, but I don't really recall much of anything about the end of apartheid or the white Bronco, probably because I was 12 years old at the time.

What I do remember, though, (that is, in addition to the Rangers winning the Stanley Cup and the release of the highly underrated Jean-Claude Van Damme epic *Timecop*) is Live's "Lightning Crashes." Man, that song was everywhere that summer: you heard it on MuchMusic, you heard it drifting out of the windows of cars driving past you as you biked to the Mac's, you heard stoned teenagers playing it on guitar on beach, you even heard your Mom and Dad humming along when it came on the radio. It was just one of those simple, slightly overwrought, arguably derivative but ultimately classic rock ballads, the kind of song that probably gets played at weddings, funerals and high-school grads with roughly equal regularity; the kind of song that actually embeds itself in the unconscious of everyone who hears it. Seriously: try to sing it to yourself right now; you can probably get the chorus on the first try. At the time, about the only knock on

"Lightning Crashes" was that it was so huge, its success so overwhelming, that the previously unknown band who released it would almost certainly collapse under the weight of expectations, turning up on VH1 as "those 'Lightning Crashes' guys" in a decade's time.

OF COURSE, Live turned out to be much more than a one-hit wonder, putting out four more studio albums (including the soon to be released *Songs from Black Mountain*) and numerous modern-rock hits, although none quite as huge as their aforementioned breakthrough. And



while some acts would try to turn their backs on this kind of early success, petulantly refusing to play their signature hit for fans, Live have largely embraced the nostalgic appeal of their early catalogue.

"Lightning Crashes' seems to be a song that has really affected people," admits Live frontman Ed Kowalczyk, on the phone from his home in Southern California. "People will come up to me and tell me that that song is really synonymous with a point in time in their lives, even if they're not really fans of our band."

Far from being offended or taken aback by such revelations from total strangers, Kowalczyk acutely understands the response his songs provoke in listeners, mostly because, as a music fan himself, he knows what it's like to have such a deep personal response to something as remote and inherently impersonal as a mass-produced, mainstream pop song.

"I can't say that I ever expected some of my songs to connect with people the way that they did, but then again I put so much of myself into this music that it doesn't sur-

prise me that other people feel so strongly about it," he explains. "I mean, I know how I feel about the music that has inspired me: when I hear 'Where the Streets Have No Name,' I am so deeply connected to that music that I feel like it's so much a part of me that I almost feel like a participant in it, in some weird way. That's the beautiful thing about music: people really do participate in your story because they find some aspects of it that coincide with their own story."

IT IS, PERHAPS, because of his fan's perspective that Kowalczyk is so willing to indulge listeners' appetite for the Live back-catalogue. "I'm so tuned into the audience, and they're having some much fun and enjoying hearing the older songs so much, that I just kind of tune into their happiness and enjoy that," he explains, noting that, as a 34-year-old guy who has only ever had one real job (rockstar), just being able to continue to tour and record successfully after 15 years on the job is a rare blessing.

"We're 15 years into this, and people are still really into what we're doing—I have to pinch myself sometimes when I realize that people are still interested in us," he enthuses. "There are so few bands that really stick to it and make a go of it, so we're going to keep doing it as long as we can."

Besides, it's not like he's sick of the gig just yet. "Why would I complain?" he says. Honestly, there's nothing like singing 'Lightning Crashes' in front of 30,000 people and having them sing it back to you. It just doesn't get any better than that." ☀

With Nickelback and Danko Jones •
Rexall Place • Sun, Jan 22 (7 pm)

LIVE

POWERPLANT

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SATURDAY JANUARY 21ST

THE TAYLORDONS

with EVERYOTHER & A FISTFUL OF NICE
TICKETS ARE \$8 AT THE DOOR

FRIDAY JANUARY 27TH

STEPHEN FRANKE AND THE NOISES
FROM THE TOOLSHED

with SLOWCOASTER & SMORGASBORD
TICKETS \$8 AT THE DOOR.

SATURDAY JANUARY 28TH

RED SHAG CARPET CD RELEASE

with THE CROOKS & MATT OHAL

TICKETS ARE \$10 IN ADVANCE. TICKETS ARE AVAILABLE AT HUB, SUB, CAB, E.T.L.C. INFO DESKS (U OF A CAMPUS), THE POWERPLANT (U OF A CAMPUS), BLACKBYRD, MEGATUNES, AND LISTEN RECORDS

WEDNESDAY FEBRUARY 1ST

WIL with SHAUN VERREAU (OF
WIDE MOUTH MASON)

with FOREVER AND A DAY

TICKETS \$12 IN ADVANCE, AND ARE AVAILABLE AT TICKETMASTER, BLACKBYRD MYOOZIK, LISTEN RECORDS, MEGATUNES, HUB, SUB, CAB, E.T.L.C. INFO DESKS, AND THE POWERPLANT.

FRIDAY FEBRUARY 3RD

MAPLE MUSIC RECORDING ARTIST
RIDLEY BENT

with THE PARAMEDICS

TICKETS ARE \$10 IN ADVANCE, AND ARE AVAILABLE AT TICKETMASTER, BLACKBYRD MYOOZIK, LISTEN RECORDS, MEGATUNES, HUB, SUB, CAB, E.T.L.C. INFO DESKS, AND THE POWERPLANT.

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SUN JAN 22

ALL AGES

DR HOOK
FEAT: RAY SAWYER
WITH GUESTS
ON SALE NOW!
SAT FEB 18

NO MINORS

THE JEFF HEALEY BAND
WITH LOOKER

ON SALE JAN 14

SAT FEB 25

NO MINORS

THE TREWS
WITH ROCKETFACE

SAT MAR 2

NO MINORS

ASIA WITH GUESTS
SAT APRIL 22

BO DIDDLEY WITH LOOKER
ON SALE APRIL 28 JAN 30

MINISTRY
JUNE 2

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music notes

BY ROSS MOROZ

Hardcore Cures Cancer • With E-Town Beatdown, Run with the Hunted, Mary Rose, Youth Unit, High Jinkz and the Collapse • Ritchie Hall • Sat, Jan 21 (6 pm) • all ages For all of its apparent popularity, hardcore gets a pretty rough ride from the general public, not to mention the media (including, admittedly, this column), and John Fucking Kennedy, frontman of local hardcore group E-Town Beatdown, has noticed.

"The hardcore scene doesn't get a whole lot of positive press," he agrees, positing some possible explanations for this dearth of glowing reviews. "When people walk down the street and see those kids with the tight jeans and girls' haircuts, I'm sure people make fun of them, because people make fun of things they don't understand," he hypothesizes. "People think the hardcore scene is a really, really violent scene—you know, like it's a bunch of meathead guys who are out to hurt kids or something—but it's actually a very positive thing. To your average person who shows up at their

first hardcore show and has never seen a kid do a spin-kick or cartwheel into the crowd or whatever, it must seem like these kids are acting out in a negative way, when really they're acting out in a positive way."

And if there remains any doubt as to the good intentions and positive energy possessed by hardcore fans, consider this: Kennedy is the organizer of this weekend's Hardcore Cures Cancer, a charity show benefiting the Cross Cancer Institute at the University of Alberta, a concept which he says has been embraced by both the impressive roster of bands performing at the benefit and the many young hardcore fans who have helped him organize the show. For Kennedy, while helping to fight cancer is a worthwhile cause in and of itself, the opportunity to bring his scene together around a common ideal was equally motivating.

"I've had people in my family die from cancer, and a lot of the bands' members' families or friends have been affected by cancer, but beyond that I think it's important to bring together kids to support a cause, especially since a lot of people probably don't think this is a scene that supports causes like this," he explains, noting that, somewhat paradoxically, hardcore is ideally suited for this kind of affirmative, constructive project.

"Hardcore is about the music, sure, but it's also about the message. That's why the kids believe in it so much; it's almost like a religion to some people, because it's the most honest, real style of music there is," he enthuses.

"There's no show you can go to that has the same energy of a hardcore show—nothing compares to a hardcore show. It's very uplifting."

Warehouse District • With Circles & Squares and A Fistful of Nice • Velvet Underground • Fri, Jan 20 (8 pm) No matter how old or cynical or just plain cranky you are, watching a band play their first show is kind of neat. Playing your first show is like losing your first tooth, or, for that matter, your virginity: likely awkward, possibly painful, but ultimately transformative in some way and hopefully a little bit of fun, once you get over being nervous about everyone watching your every move.

Okay, so that metaphor kind of fell apart a bit at the end there (or did it...?), but the fact remains that scene newcomers Warehouse District will probably experience at least some of these emotions when they take the stage for the very first time this Friday at the Venue Formerly Known as the Victory Lounge.

"We're all super-stoked," agrees Warehouse District drummer Steve Steffler, who says he and pianist Christie Buchta, guitarist Tanner Lavoie, singer Pia Ravi and bassist Steve Unlikey started the group mostly as a way to temporarily escape from their "menial office day-jobs that suck our souls."

"When you have this kind of a life, you need a creative outlet, and Warehouse District is really good for that," he explains. "We jam like twice a week, and try to write as much new music as we can."

Sounds like fun, sure, but taking the step from jamming twice a week as a "creative outlet" to playing a real show at a real venue where real people will pay real money to see you play has to indicate some amount of ambition doesn't it?

"You mean, like, is this our big shot at trying to launch a musical career?" Steffler laughs. "I don't know about that."

"We want to make sure we do everything right, as far as having stuff like a press kit and a demo to try and help us get some exposure, but it's purely for our own entertainment," he clarifies. "I don't think that we have a strong desire to sell out and become a big crazy rock band, but we also are hoping that there are people out there who are into our sound."

Of course, with no shows under their belt, Warehouse District aren't yet sure who and where these people are, although they assume that their music will be well received, if for no other reason than how refreshingly different they feel their sound is.

"I think that we sound a lot different than a lot of Edmonton bands," says Steffler. "I don't think that very many bands are interested in being mellow these days. There's this big dance-punk craze going on right now, and everybody thinks 'oh, well, we have to make the crowd dance, that's the key.'"

Hmm... Anyone in particular?

"I don't think we need to start any wars at this point," he laughs. "Why, are there any bands you'd like me to trash?"

My, good heavens, of course not: Music Notes loves all bands. Doesn't everyone know that by now?

john guliak & the new lougans • Saturday, Jan 14
the maykings • Saturday, Jan 21
the old seed • Saturday, Jan 28
ayla brook (of a sound system) • Saturday, Feb 3
the plain dealers • Saturday, Feb 10

10425 - 82 ave • 4-6pm • no cover

39th Canadian General Election •
Mon, Jan 23 (7:30 am-7:30 pm) As a service to those of you who've read the election coverage in the major dailies, attended the all-candidates forum in your riding and discussed the issues feverishly with your family and friends but are waiting to decide how to vote until you find out who the guitarist in Ten Second Epic is supporting, *Music Notes* took the liberty of asking several outspoken Edmonton musicians for their thoughts on the current state of Canadian politics.

"I am not voting, because I feel that no matter how I vote we're just going to end up with a collection of politicians who are all corrupt and all a bunch of scumbags," explains the ever-cheerful Scott Koladich of local electro-popsters Lazersnake. "Both the Liberals and the Conservatives have been involved in high-profile scandals every time they've been in power over the last 20 years, so it seems like Scumbag A versus Scumbag B."

This infectious optimism is echoed by Bryan Kulba, local producer and

guitarist for the Wolfnote (who are kind of, but not really, but, yeah, pretty much, you know, breaking up, sort of, but that's another column altogether). "I think people should spoil their ballots, because by spoiling your ballot you're putting in a vote of non-confidence in the system that we currently have in Canada," he suggests. "I have no confidence in the political system: I don't think that anyone is fighting hard enough for the rights of individuals and the greater good of Canada. People are so worried about getting their party into power, but what does that have to do with ordinary people? I don't believe that any of the big three parties are good parties. I think they're all evil and bad."

Ten Second Epic guitarist Daniel Carrier, however, strongly disagrees. "I think we should focus on the good things more than the bad," says Carrier, who plans to vote for beleaguered Liberal Anne McLellan. "Yeah, there've been scandals, but you have to vote for who you think will run the country the best, and all I see the Conservatives

doing is turning us into another U.S.A. Maybe they're not as bad as I think, but there's something about all these corporate tax breaks and high-income tax breaks that seems wrong, somehow."

"We need to safeguard the things about Canada that will benefit us in the long run," concurs noted illustrator and Vertical Struts frontman Raymond Biesinger, who has been campaigning for Edmonton Strathcona NDP candidate Linda Duncan. "I think that fundamentally government does affect us, and it's very difficult to pretend that over the course of our lives the shape of the government and what it does for citizens won't affect us greatly."

Mark Birtles Project guitarist Bryan Birtles, however, simply resents the fact that his favourite political party has chosen not to field a candidate in his riding. "I can't vote for the Bloc," he complains, mentioning that he might just write in the name of his preferred choice. "In fact, I think I might just write in 'André Boisclair.' I like him: he's a gay cokehead and so are all of my friends, so I can feel where he's coming from." ♦

MUSIC WEEKLY

YOUR GUIDE TO LIVE MUSIC IN EDMONTON

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Your Music Destination

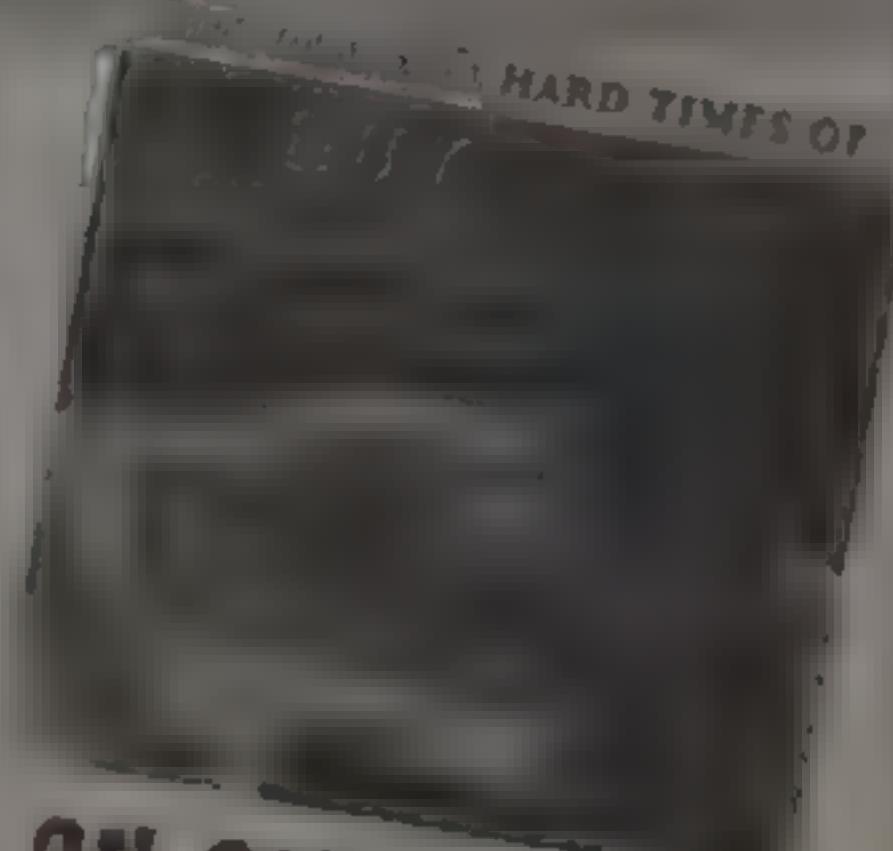
FOR THE WEEK ENDING JAN 19, 2006

1. The Co-Dependants - Live At The Mecca Café Vol.2 (indelible)
2. Karla Anderson - The Embassy Sessions (indelible)
3. Harry Manx - Mantras For Madmen (dog my cat)
4. Sarah Harmer - I'm A Mountain (cold snap)
5. Bruce Cockburn - Speechless (true north)
6. Wilco - Kicking Television (nonesuch)
7. Paul Kelly - Foggy Highway (true north)
8. The Strokes - First Impressions Of Earth (rca)
9. Corb Lund - Hair in my eyes like a Highland Steer (stony plain)
10. Clap Your Hands Say Yeah - Clap Your Hands Say Yeah (cyh)
11. Colin James - Limelight (maple)
12. Metric - Live It Out (last gang)
13. Betty Lavette - I've Got My Own Hell To Raise (anti)
14. Twin Fangs - Street Sweeper (rectangle)
15. Jimmy And The Sleepers - S/T (sb)
16. System Of A Down - Hypnotize (american)
17. Broken Social Scene - Broken Social Scene (arts&crafts)
18. Faunts - High Expectations/Low Results (friendly fire)
19. Ann Vriend - Modes Of Transport (av)
20. Sufjan Stevens - Illinois (asthmatic kitty)
21. The New Pornographers - Twin Cinema (mint)
22. Cam Penner & The Gravel Road - Felt Like A Sunday Night (cp)
23. Calexico/Iron & Wine - In The Reins (overcoat)
24. Death From Above 1979 - Romance Bloody Romance Remixes & B-Sides (last gang)
25. Kate Bush - Aerial (emi)
26. Neil Diamond - 12 Songs (american)
27. Marah - If You Didn't Laugh, You'd Cry (yep roc)
28. Wolf Parade - Apologies To The Queen Mary (sub pop)
29. The Vertical Struts - S/T (popecho)
30. Rodney Crowell - The Outsider (columbia)

SOUNDTRACK: THE LIFE & HARD TIMES OF GUY TERRIFICO - BRING IT BACK HOME

As more and more audiences across Canada get the chance to see Michael Mabbott's excellent film debut, The Life And Hard Times Of Guy Terrifico, the same number of people also get the chance to hear its soundtrack, Bring It Back Home. The film's title character is played by singer Matt Murphy, whom we just haven't heard enough from since The Flashing Lights called it quits. Murphy and Mabbott co-wrote Terrifico's songs and they're outstanding.

10355 Whyte Ave. Shop online at megatunes.com 434-6342



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THU LIVE MUSIC

ATLANTIC TRAP AND GILL

Duff Robison

BACKDRAUGHT PUB

Open stage

BLUE CHAIR CAFÉ

Jim Hepler; 7pm; donations

CHRISTOPHER'S PARTY

PUB Open stage hosted by Alberta Crude; 6-10pm

DUSTER'S PUB

Jam hosted by Brian Petch

FOUR ROOMS

Kent Sanagster Trio

GRINDER

Thursday jam night

JAMMERS PUB

Thursday open jam; 7-11pm

J AND R BAR AND GRILL

Open stage with The Poster Boys (pop/rock/blues); 8:30pm-12:30am

JUBILEE AUDITORIUM

The 70's Show: Bjorn Again, Nearly Neil; 8pm; \$35.00 - CA \$45 at TicketMaster

JULIAN'S PIANO BAR

Graham's Twisted Jazz Standards; 7:30-10:30pm

KINGSKNIGHT PUB'S

Tommy, Hazeldean

NEST

Open stage with Nick Zyla every Thu

NEW CITY LIKWID LOUNGE

Epoxies, Frosted Tipz; all ages event; \$15

O'BRYNE'S

Mr. Lucky (blues/roots); 10pm-12:30; no cover

SIDETRACK CAFÉ

PiND, The Blame-Its, Lets Dance; 8pm; \$7 (door)

STANDARD

Deep Dish featuring Sharam; \$20 (adv) at TicketMaster, Foosh, Underground, Colourblind, Yess Hair, Tree House Records

URBAN LOUNGE

Calico Drive, Transit Radio

WILD WEST SALOON

Redneck Sugar

DJS

ARMOURY

Vintage Thursdays: retro rock, dance and old school hip hop

BILLY BOB'S LOUNGE

Escapade Entertainment

BLACK DOG FREEHOUSE

Thump: intronica with the DDK Soundsystem

BUDDY'S

DJ Squiggles, Yoko Oh-no

DECADANCE

Soul Heaven with Sweetz, T-Bass, Rezident Funk

ESMERALDA'S

Big and Rich Thursday: top 40, country

FILTHY McNASTY'S

Punk Rock Bingo with DJ S.W.A.G.

GAS PUMP

Ladies Nite; Top 40/dance with DJ Christian

GINGUR SKY LOUNGE

Urban substance Thursday: with Urban Substance Sound Crew DJ Spence Diamonds;

HALO

Deep 'n' Delicious

with Diz; \$10 (before 10pm)/\$15 (after 10pm)

HAVANA CLUB Urban, hip hop, Reggae beats with 717 Entertainment

KAS BAR Urban House; with DJ Mark Stevens; 9pm

NEWCASTLE PUB Students Night: hip hop with DJ Odin

OVERTIME BOILER AND TAPROOM SOUTH Retro to New: classic rock, R&B, urban and dance with DJ Mikee; 9pm-2am; no cover

RED STAR Femme Fatale: rock, pop, hip hop with DJ Kelly

RUM JUNGLE Student Night: Great beats

VELVET UNDERGROUND NRMILS WLCM: electro, techno with DJ Nik 7, guests; no minors; 9pm (door); \$4

WILD WEST SALOON Redneck Sugar

CLASSICAL

CONVOCATION HALL

Music at Convocation Hall: Eleni Pappa (piano), Konstantina Pappa (violin); 8pm; \$15 (student/senior)/\$20 (adult) at TIX on the Square, door

STUDIO 27 Contempo; New music by student composers; 12pm; free

WINSPEAR CENTRE Happy Birthday, Mozart; Richard Sparks (conductor); 2pm; \$10 (student/senior)/\$15 (adult)

DJS

ARMOURY Fishbone Fridays: Top 40 downstairs/retro 80 upstairs

AZUCAR LATIN NIGHT-CLUB Top 40 with Latin band and DJ Papi

BLACK DOG FREEHOUSE Hair of the Dog: The Maykings; 4-6pm; no cover

BLUE CHAIR CAFÉ Ranger Creek Wranglers; 9pm; \$35 (dinner show)

CASINO EDMONTON Robin Kelly and Thomas Alexander (tribute show)

CASINO YELLOWHEAD Madison Drive (pop/rock)

CENTRE D'ARS VISUELS

DE L'ALBERTA Pierre Paul Bugeaud (bass), Joel Lavoie (guitar), Gord Gruber (drums); 7:30pm

CALIENTE Funktion Fridays

DANTE'S BISTRO DJ Johnny Sky

DECADANCE Ladies Night sexy house with Smoo, guests

ESCAPE Fahrenheit Fridays

ESMERALDA'S DJ Jimmy Friday; 8pm (door)

GAS PUMP Top 40/dance with DJ Christian

GINGUR SKY LOUNGE

Freedom Friday: Shortround, Echo, Shocka-Bean; no minors; 9pm (door)

HALO Mod Club: indie rock, new wave, Brit pop, and '60s soul with DJ Blue Jay, DJ Travy D; no cover before 10pm; \$5 (after 10pm)

HAVANA CLUB Urban, hip hop, Reggae beats with 717 Entertainment

LEVEL 2 LOUNGE Hypnotiq Friday

O'BRYNE'S DJ Finnegan; 9pm; no cover

ONE ON WHYTE Dancing with DJ

OVERTIME BOILER AND TAPROOM SOUTH Retro to New: classic rock, R&B, urban and dance with DJ Mikee; 9pm-2am; no cover

RED STAR Loaded Friday: indie rock and Brit pop with DJ Readymade Flyboy

RUM JUNGLE Peoples DJ Spinning

VELVET UNDERGROUND

NEST Jordan Knight (from New Kids on the Block); 8pm (door); \$20 at NAITSA office, the Nest

JEFFREYS CAFÉ AND WINE BAR Helena Magerowski (jazz); 8:30pm; \$10

J.J.'S PUB Mine All Mine (rock)

KINGSKNIGHT PUB'S Stash

NEWCASTLE PUB Sally's Krackers

RENDZVOUS

SHYLER Machura with Marty Sillanen; 9pm; \$5

REXALL PLACE Terri Clark, Johnny Reid, Brad Paisley; 7pm; \$42.50-\$55.50 at TicketMaster

SIDETRACK CAFÉ Shuyler Jansens, Hobotron, The Digs, Bramwell Park; 8pm; \$10 (door)

STONEHOUSE PUB Top 40 with DJ Tysin

THURSDAY AFTERHOURS

Flashback: house/hard with Johnny Dangerous, Andy Inertia, guests; 1-7am

URBAN LOUNGE Funktion Fridays

Y AFTERHOURS Foundation

Fridays: Main: Youthful, funky, up-beat house with Anthony Donohue, Nestor Delano, Dragon, Ryan Wade, Roofie, DJ Juicy; Lounge: Deep house, rare groove with Tory P; Bassment: Garage, house with Bree, Nic-E; no minors

Square
RENDEZVOUS Hammer of Eden, Dead Ring, You'll Get Yours

SIDETRACK CAFÉ Raygun Cowboys (CD release party), The Smokin' 45s, The Firebrands, DJ Electreau, 8pm; \$10

STARLITE ROOM Rake SOS, Shattered Core; no minors; 8pm (door)

URBAN LOUNGE Ozzy Ozmunds

CLASSICAL

WINSPEAR CENTRE Glorious Gershwin: Robbin Pops; Edmonton Symphony Orchestra, Kevin Cole (piano), Denzel Sinclair (vocals), William Eddins (conductor); 8pm; \$30-\$70

DJS

AZUCAR LATIN NIGHT-CLUB Top 40 with Latin band and DJ Papi

DANTE'S BISTRO DJ John, Sky

ESCAPE NIGHTCLUB Saturday Night House Party with Urban Metropolis featuring Harman B and DJ Kwake

GINGUR SKY LOUNGE Soulout Saturday: DJs on rotation; no minors; 9pm (door)

HALO For Those Who Know with Junior Brown, Waylon Sherrington, Remo, guests; no entry after 1:45am; \$5

LEVEL 2

Allegro, With Everyone Else; 6pm event, 6pm (door), \$5 (adv), \$7 (door)

REKALL PLACE Nickelback, 7pm, Danko Jones; 7pm, \$19.75 \$49.75 at Tickmaster

ROSEBOWL Jam with the Keweenawflowers, 10pm

SIDETRACK CAFÉ The Sunday Night Gong Show: Dj Duderian, Rattpoison; 9pm, \$6

CLASSICAL

BLUE CHAIR CAFÉ Thomas Mead, noon, donations

ROBERTSON WESLEY UNITED CHURCH A Taste of Mozart: Alberta Baroque Music Society, 3pm; \$22 (adv); \$17 (senior/student); \$10 on the Square

WINSPEAR CENTRE Happy Birthday Mozart: Pro Coro Canada Chamber Orchestra, Ricard Sparks (conductor); 2pm, tickets available at Winspear Centre box office

DJS

BACKSTAGE TAP AND GRILL Industry Night: with Atomic Improve, Jameeki and DJ Tim

BUDDY'S NIGHTCLUB Stardust Lounge: with Mz Bianca and Mz Vanity Fair, DJ Party Tonkash

CALENTE Urt an Ladies Night: 91.7 the Bounce on 91.7 with DJ Invincible, DJ Cadence Weapon X

DECADANCE Worship with DJ Jacky, DTDR, guests; 9pm close

HALO Popscene: indie hits, 90s, 80s classics, underground favourites with DJ Master F, FloorMatt, Kyle, G-Spot, Jer-Lo, Travy D; 9pm (door); no cover

ONE ON WHYTE Vinyl Side Sundays: with DJs

RUM JUNGLE Service Industry Night

SPORTSWORLD ROLLER SKATING DISCO Public skate; 1-5pm; \$5/\$4 (rentals)

STOLLI'S Stolli's House Arrest: with Johnny Dangerous, Andy Inertia, DJ T

VENUE GUIDE

MON

LIVE MUSIC

JULIAN'S PIANO BAR Graham's Twisted Jazz Standards; 7:30-10:30pm

L.B.'S PUB House band; 9:30pm-1am; no cover

HONEST MUR'S BAR AND GRILL Jam session hosted by the Retro Rockets Band; 8pm

NEW YORK BAGEL CAFÉ Marco Claveria (samba to Bolero) every Monday

SIDETRACK CAFÉ Open stage Mondays hosted by Ben Spencer; 9pm; no cover

TAPHOUSE Monday Live: with Big Tickle; 8:30-11:30pm; no cover

DJS

BAR WILD Bar Gone Wild Mondays: Service Industry Night; no minors; 9pm-2am

BLACK DOG FREEHOUSE DJ Pennymentary

BUDDY'S Ashley Love and DJ T

FILTHY McNASTY'S Metal Mondays: with DJ S.W.A.G.

TUE

LIVE MUSIC

BLIND PIC PUB AND GRILL Open stage with Mark Ammar

DRUID (JASPER AVENUE) Open stage with Chris Wynters and guest

JULIAN'S PIANO BAR Graham's Twisted Jazz Standards; 7:30-10:30pm

ROSEBOWL Jam with the Keweenawflowers, 10pm

SIDETRACK CAFÉ The Sunday Night Gong Show: Dj Duderian, Rattpoison; 9pm, \$6

THE CORE 2101 Millbourne Rd

COWBOYS 10102-180 St, 481-8739

DANTE'S BISTRO 17328 Stony Plain Rd, 486-4448

DECADANCE 10018-105 St, 990-1792

DRUID (JASPER AVE) 11606 Jasper Ave, 454-9928

DUSTER'S PUB 6402-118 Ave, 474-5554

ESCAPE WEM, Upper level, 444-2335

ESMERALDA'S 11830 Kingsway Ave, 453-7320

FESTIVAL PLACE 100 Festival Way, Sherwood Park, 449-3378

FILTHY McNASTY'S 10511-82 Ave, 432-5224

FOUR ROOMS Edmonton Centre, 102 Ave, 426-4767

GAS PUMP 10166-114 St, 488-4841

GINGUR SKY LOUNGE 15505-118 Ave, 913-4312/953-3606

GOLDEN HARVEST CHURCH 10504-128 St, Stony Plain Rd, 447-4357

GRINDER 10957-124 St, 453-1709

CASINO (EDMONTON) 7055 Argyle Rd, 463-9467

CASINO (YELLOWHEAD) 12464-153 St, 463-9467

CENTRE FOR SPIRITUAL AWARENESS 7621-101 Ave, 469-1909

KINGSLIGHT PUB'S A Little Bitter

LEGENDS PUB Open, 6pm, Hosted by Gary Thomas

O'BRYNE'S Celtic night with Shannon Johnson and friends; 9:30pm

SIDETRACK CAFÉ Perfect Blue, 0 Four What; 8pm; \$6 (door)

URBAN LOUNGE Salsa and the City; 9pm; Salsa dance lessons 8pm; \$5 (door)

ANNUAL ICE ON WHYTE FESTIVAL Rob Heath; 7pm; donation

DJS

BLACK DOG FREEHOUSE Viva: with DJ Sean

BUDDY'S Malebox, DJ Arrowchaser

CALIENTE Bashment Tuesdays: Reggae open mic with Elite Reggae Sounds, Bomb Squad, Q.B., Chrome Nine, Southside Sound; no minors; 11pm; no cover

ESMERALDA'S Top 40, country, R&B with DJ Foreplay, DJ Jimmy

GINGUR SKY LOUNGE Juicy Tuesday: DJ Spinycle, 91.7 the Bounce; no cover

NEW CITY SUBURBS Bingo with DJ Dillozer and MC Fistinyourface

NEW CITY LIKwid LOUNGE Dominion with DJ Scott and goth-metal guests

THE ROOST Flamingo Bingo: with DJ Janny; 8-midnight; \$1 (member)/\$4 (non-member)

SAPPHIRE RESTAURANT AND LOUNGE Tapas Tuesdays: popular house beats with DJ Kevin Wong

SPORTSWORLD ROLLER SKATING DISCO Retro night: music flash backs from the '50s, '60s, '70s, '80s and '90s; 7pm-12 midnight; \$5/\$4 (rentals)

URBAN LOUNGE Salsa and the City; 9pm; Salsa dance lessons 8pm; \$5 (door)

VELVET UNDERGROUND Youth Beat: hip hop, electro, indie rock, dance punk, funk with DJ Cadence Weapon;

BLACK DOG FREEHOUSE Glitter Gulch: with DJ Buster Friendly; no cover

BUDDY'S Gurlz Gone Wild Midnite: with DJ Eddy

DJS

JUBILEE AUDITORIUM Zamfir and the Athenaeum String Quintet; 8pm; \$48.25-\$59 at TicketMaster

MCDOUGALL UNITED CHURCH Music Wednesdays at Noon: Trio Con Brio (violin, cello, piano); 12:10 to 12:50pm; free

ROSSDALE COMMUNITY HALL Little Flower open stage hosted by Brian Gregg, 8pm

SIDETRACK CAFÉ Ellis, Axiomatik; 8pm; \$8 (door)

URBAN LOUNGE Vacation on Mars, Butterfinger

WILD WEST SALOON Aaron Goodwin

CLASSICAL

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WILD WEST SALOON Aaron Goodwin

CLASSICAL

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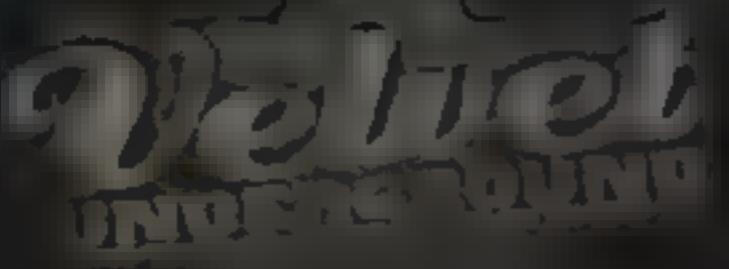
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MUSIC



Road most traveled

Edmonton's Bramwell Park reflects on a life of hitchhiking and music

BY DAVID BERRY

When it comes to folk music, there just ain't nothing like the prospect of the open road to get a songwriter's heart a-swelling. From down-home gut country to breathy indie folk, the idea of land and place winds its way through the roots consciousness like one of those back country roads they're always singing about, right up there with

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love as the topic of choice. Lucky for Edmonton-via-Montréal's folkster Bramwell Park, then, that he had a fair bit of exploring the world under his belt before he even started playing music professionally.

Born and raised in Mount Royal, Park spent a fair chunk of time after high school backpacking around

VUE FOLK

Southeast Asia and, after realizing he had seen more of Vietnam than his own country, driving around the Great White North, staying with friends and busking for gas money. Though he eventually ended up in Red Deer, followed by Grant McEwan's music program, it's a safe bet to

say that while he might have got the formal training in our fair city, his slowed-down, bluegrass folk belongs as much to driving through Ontario cottage country as songwriting classes at GMAC. There are some things Wilfred Kozub just can't teach you.

"Busking is a really good way to meet a lot of strange people," says Park, rubbing his folky beard. "One time in Orillia, in Ontario... well, I really like to check a city out, roam around a bit. So I walked to the lake, and I found this hill with a nice view, so I just sort of sat down for a while, and the sun was setting, so it was all really nice. Then this guy came walking down, and he came by me, and I was just like, 'Okay, whatever, just this guy.' He's like, 'Nice view, eh?' and I was like, 'Yeah, it's really nice down here,' and then he's like, 'Want a blowjob?'

"I was just like, 'No, no, I'm fine,'" he explains sheepishly. "I got away as quick as I could. I met some girls later on who told me that that was sort of the spot to meet for gay guys to hook up and stuff like that. It was weird. I didn't go back there again."

AND WHILE that particular experience hasn't exactly lent itself to song just yet—"Blowjobs on Sunset Hill maybe?"—it's the kind of "hard traveling" he says he looks for in music.

"It's that kind of hitchhiking sleeping in the car thing; basically poor traveling," he explains. "Any musicians I look up to really have some hard traveling, so I think it's really important, and that it's influenced me in a good way, and I hope it still does."

Of course, his next bit of traveling is likely to be a fair bit easier than sleeping in the car and getting propositioned in small towns. A scant week after opening with Shuyler Jansen at the Sidetrack, he'll be taking off for New York, where he'll hook up with a Holland America cruise ship and spend the better part of the next five months gorging on lobster buffets and playing in a jazz trio as he sails the Caribbean and Mediterranean. Though the trip is going to postpone the recording of a new album with his group, Bramwell and the Leftovers, until he gets back in June, Park says he's looking forward to the trip, if only as a chance to scope out places he might like to return to.

"We play three to four hours a day, spread out across the meal times. You get a day's leave though and stuff, so it should be pretty awesome," he explains. "Originally I thought we were just going to the Caribbean, and that would have been cool, but what I'm really looking forward to is the Mediterranean Italy, I think, is just going to be amazing—I think, anyway: I don't even really know what it's going to be like, but I'm sure I have a really romanticized view of it. But even if I just get to see all these places for only a day, it'll be nice. Maybe I can pick a few places to backpack to in the future." ☀

BRAMWELL PARK
AND THE LEFTOVERS

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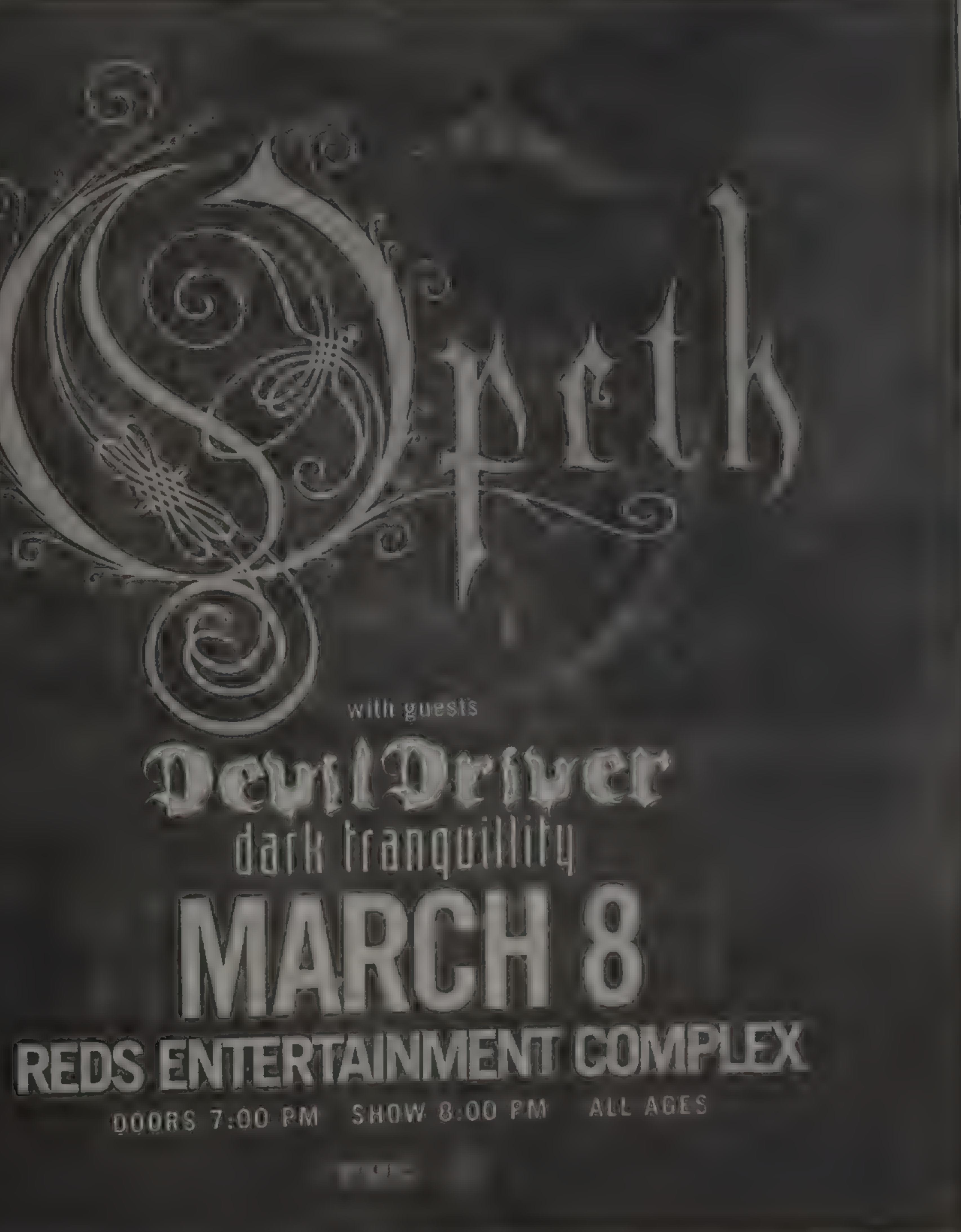
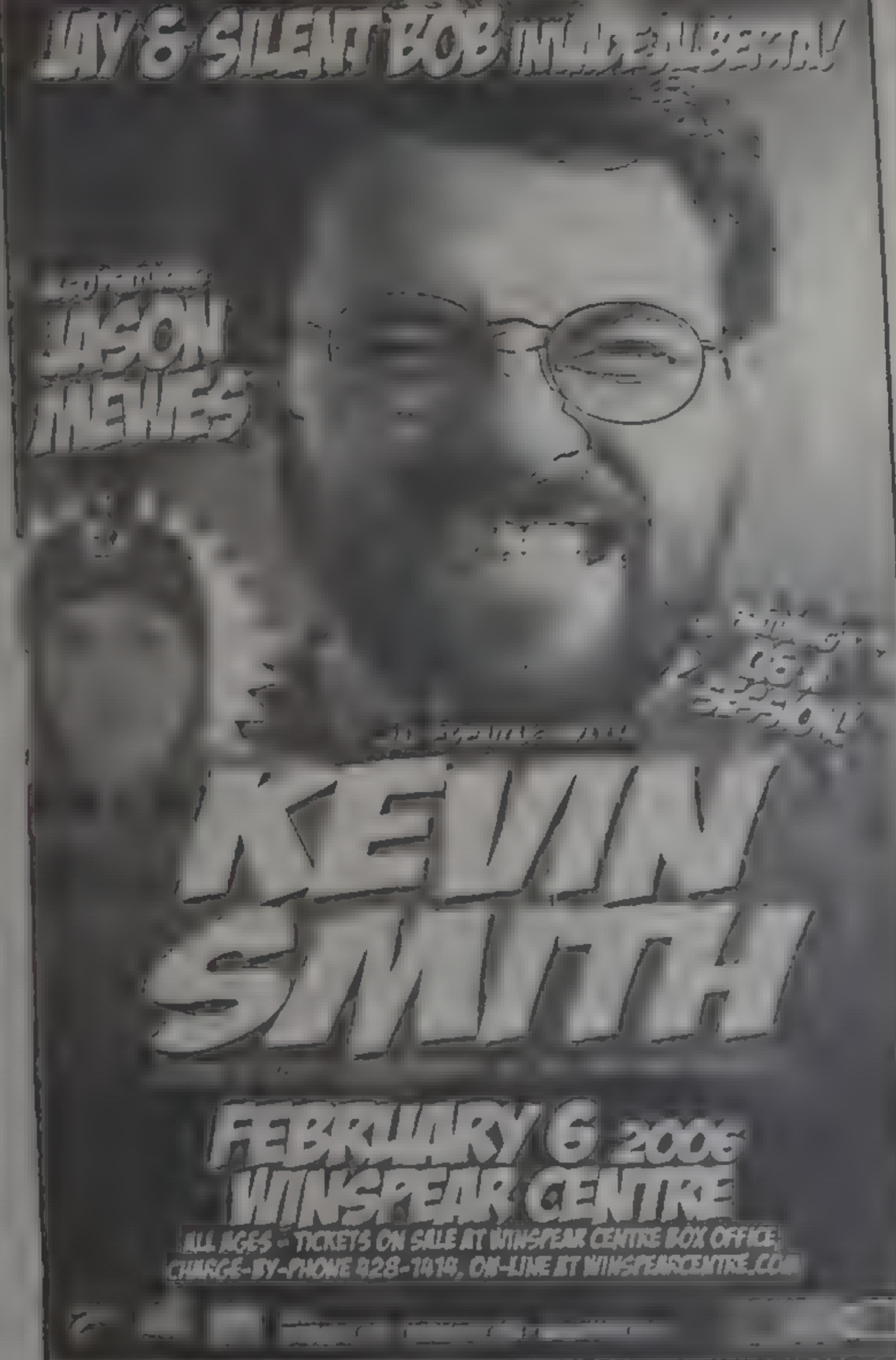
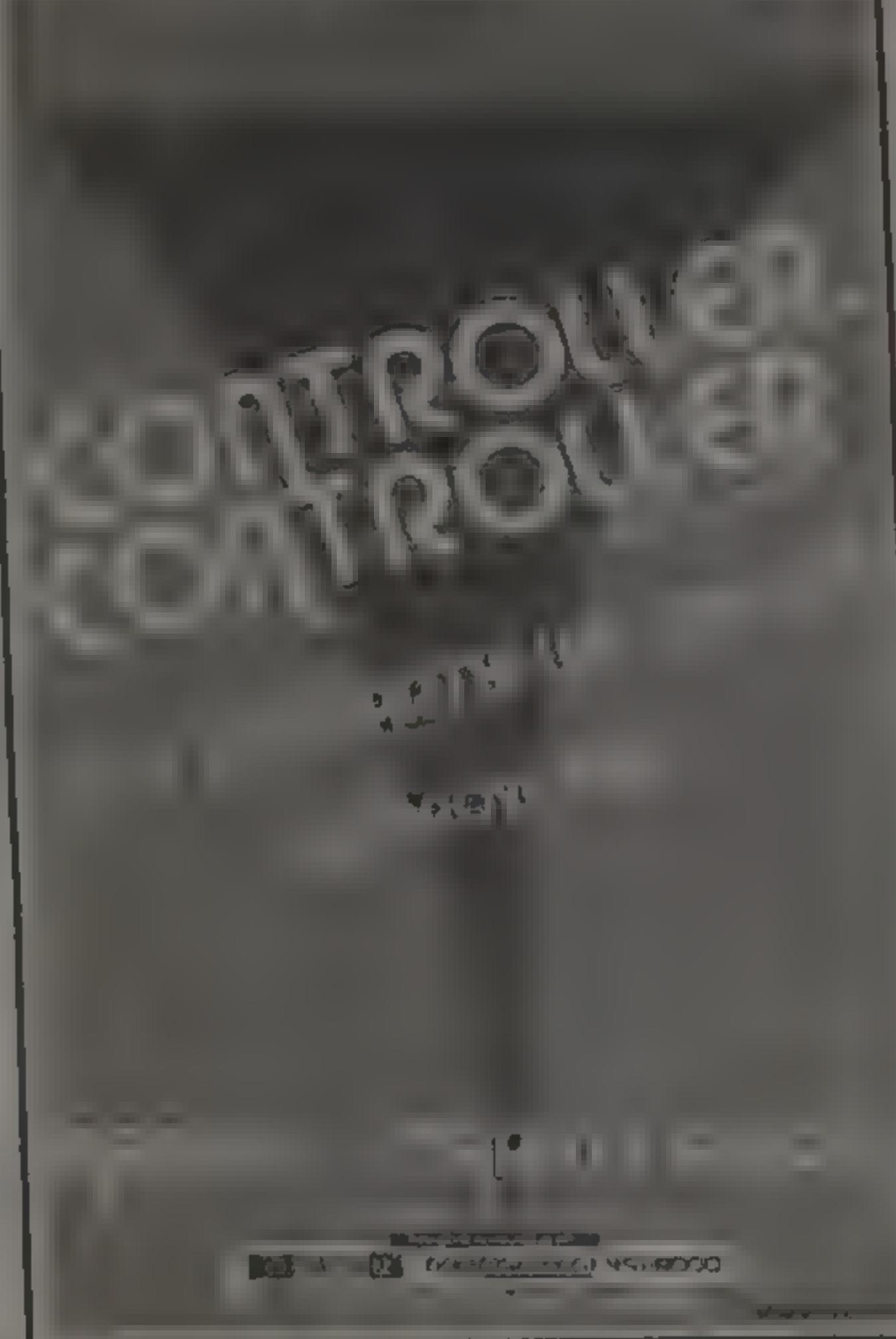
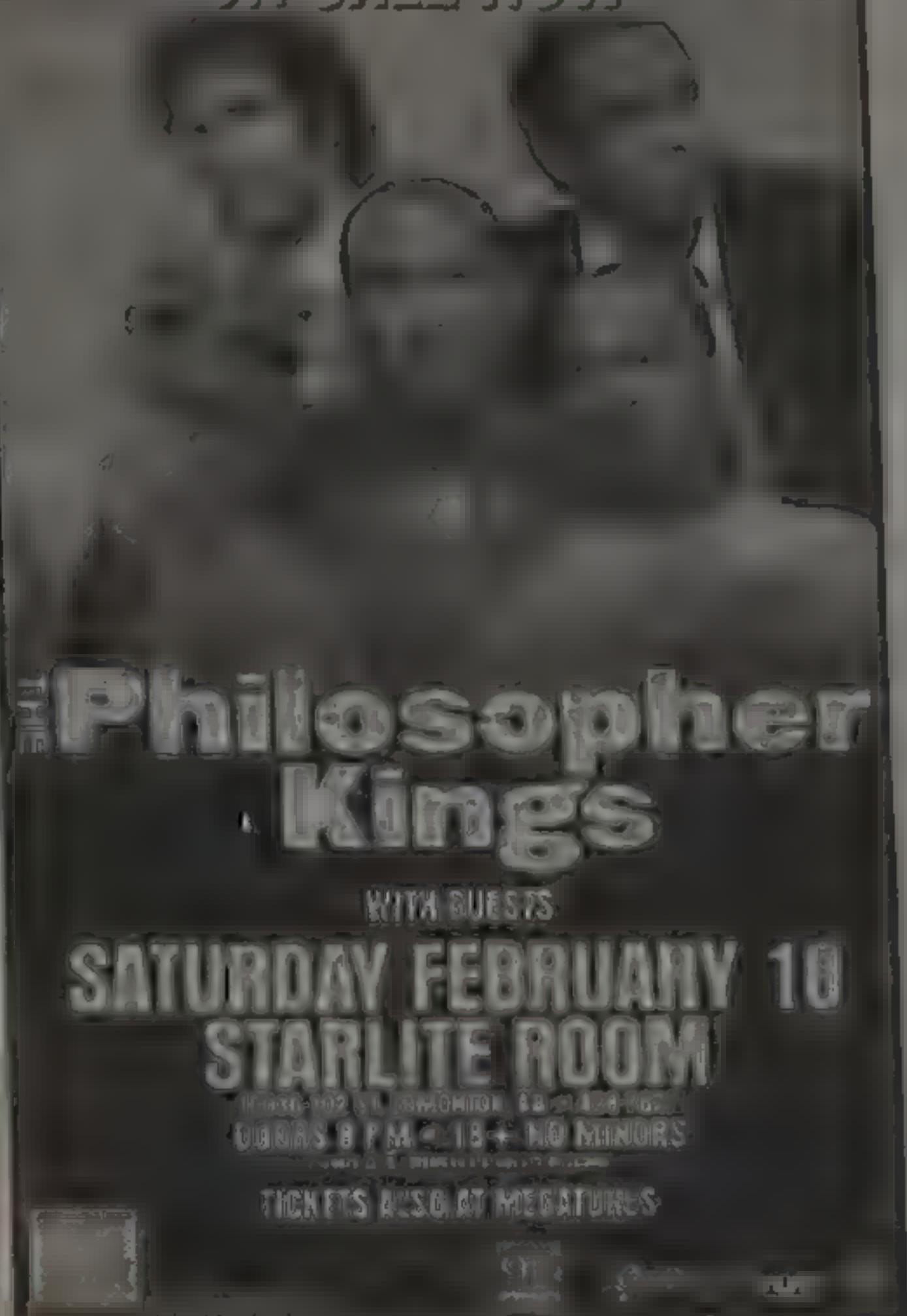
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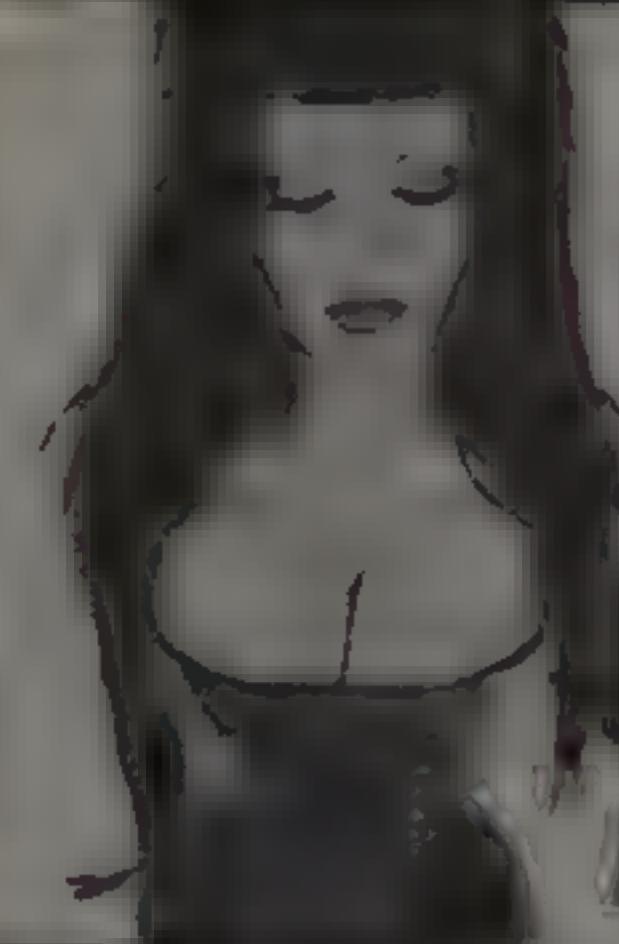
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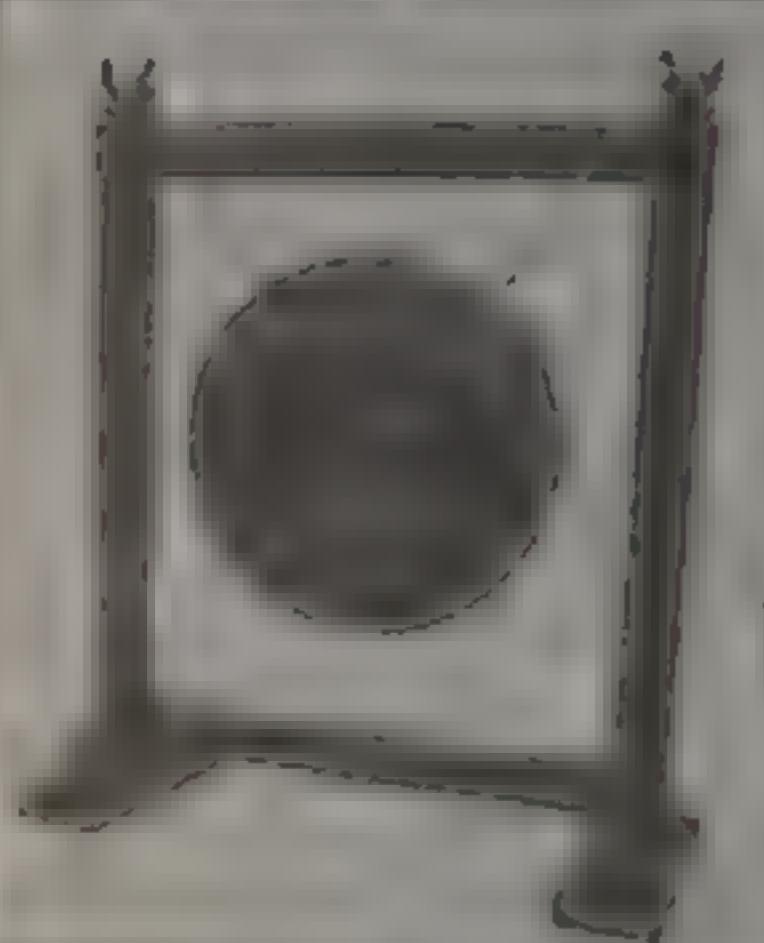


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Friday
Jan 27, 2006

NEW CITY

Shameless plug

Life for Shameless Records founder Glen Erickson is anything but easy, even if his band name say different

BY TYSON KABAN

If you're a musician looking to make it in the business, it's probably not going to happen if you're doing it all on your own. After all, booking your own shows, making recordings in your basement and handling your own PR can only take you so far, so it's no surprise that most musicians consider getting signed to a record label a necessary, if not completely unavoidable, step to take in reaching a certain level of success or exposure.

In some cases, signing with a label could include some free time in the studio, more connections within the industry, wider distribution within a larger market, even getting paid just to put out an album. But more often than not, a record deal also means that artists must relinquish some control over the direction of their careers and even the music they create. But according to Glen Erickson (who goes by the moniker Glenroy), musicians shouldn't have to make that kind of credible sacrifice to further their ambitions. Four years ago, he founded Shameless Records, a small, unconventional Edmonton-based label, which he uses to teach new artists how to be truly independent and take charge of their careers.

"A label can be a number of things. For me, up until now, it's been mostly doing the promotion side of things for Shameless bands and I guess that's what most labels do, big or small," Glenroy says. "But then I started doing all of the bands' management duties, doing all of the calling and the bookings and writing up their promotions and sending things out, and I quickly realized that I needed to put all of that back into their court."

"There are a lot of musicians just starting out and they have no idea how to get a record made, who to call and how much things cost, so I think it's okay, at first, for me to help those people who have no idea what they are doing. But the mandate for what I do is to come along-

side and help artists to run their own careers and to be truly independent. Basically, teaching them how to run their own career."

WITH YEARS OF EXPERIENCE playing in bands (most recently in local

group Easy Life Club) and possessing a keen knowledge of the local scene, Glenroy clearly knows what he's talking about and he says a lot of artists appreciate his approach to the music industry. Currently the label has a roster of 10 different acts, and he is con-

stantly getting approached by musicians who want to be a part of the Shameless family. But since he has a wife, two kids, a day job and doesn't get paid much, if at all, Glenroy has to refuse more bands than he signs.

"I don't really make any money from the musicians on the roster. Sure, at certain points they'll give me kickbacks for some of my design work and other times I just make agreements with other bands when they put a CD out. But I want them to work really hard to pay for the music and their costs—basically pay back mom and dad. And if there's anything left after that, I might get a royalty," he says. "Because I have a house and a mortgage to pay, I can only extend myself so far. So at this point it's going to have to be something or someone pretty special for me to get behind and put on the label."

Glenroy's own project, the alt-rock/folk/country outfit Easy Life Club, is (obviously) on the label, and he will be releasing the band's first

self-titled album during the first Shameless Records Showcase, which, since last August, has been a regular event on the last Thursday of every month at the Sidetrack. After expending most of his energy working on behalf of other bands, making and releasing his own album of his own songs has been quite the satisfying experience.

"This record is my first step into the spotlight. I recorded it for seven months on Sunday mornings for two hours at a time. My life was just so insane so that was the only time I could do it. It was really ridiculous," he says. "But I was so hellbent on getting my first record out and it turned out beautifully. It's my record and after playing music for so many years and telling everyone else how to get it done, I guess it was about time I got my own shit together." ☀

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Stephen Cooke, Halifax Herald



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NEW SOUNDS

CLEARLAKE
MEMBER
(DOMINO)

Everyone has an album that they can say they didn't much care for upon first listen, but that with repeated listens burrowed its way into their brain until they suddenly discovered they enjoyed it quite thoroughly. I give you Clearlake as one such example. Only vaguely familiar with band, the first time I gave this a spin it faded into the periphery of attention within about 10 minutes. Friends asked how it was; I gave it a solid, "Meh." Then I listened to it again. I was genuinely shocked by how much good there is on this album, and how much I missed initially.

Specializing in songs that could have been lifted from the Spiritualized playbook, Clearlake combines lovely harmonies with guitars, pushed to do things they perhaps would rather not do, to beautifully noisy effect. This English foursome seems to pride them-

selves on riding a constant wave of musical limbo. The shrieking guitars battle with the sound of Motown on "Getting Light Outside," Blur on "Finally Free," and Mojave 3 on "Dreamt That You Died." Smashing together these various influences and sounds, they walk a delicate line, and although they frequently sound like they're in danger of losing that balance, they never do. ★★★★ —GRAHAM JOHNSON

SEU JORGE
THE LIFE AQUATIC STUDIO SESSIONS
(HOLLYWOOD)

First things first, it should probably be noted that this is likely one of the least necessary albums released in the last few years. However talented Seu Jorge is—and he certainly makes a compelling case across these 14 tracks—there is more or less no reason for someone to redo the '70s Bowie canon in acoustic bossa nova. There's pretty much no philosophical under-

pinnings to these covers, as evidenced by the track list, which has no theme other than Bowie songs roughly from the Ziggy era; Wes Anderson thought it would be cool to have Portuguese-language Bowie tracks in his movie, he was pretty much right, and they became popular enough to demand their own album. That's it.

Having said that, the only reason for making a useless thing is that one admires it intensely, or so the saying goes, and it's hard to imagine what kind of joyless pedant you'd have to be to not like this album. Jorge's reworkings of hip-shaking glam into subdued Brazilian folk hold an ineffable charm, particularly if you happen to be a fan of Bowie (or Anderson) in the first place. What could have easily been a soulless Starbucks title in the wrong hands is imbued with a slow, breezy heart, and Jorge's easy baritone and languid manner on the guitar manage to maintain the depth of each song while pulling it into his own realm. "Starman" and "Queen Bitch" are the standouts, hitting the right mix of Bowie swagger and diddling around

with an acoustic guitar ease; sitting around a campfire with Ziggy Star dust, almost.

It may not have much of a reason to exist, but man is it ever a thing of beauty. ★★★★ —DAVID BERRY

CARIBOU
MARINO: THE VIDEOS
(DOMINO)

Seeing as how the entire T&A content of this collection is limited to about 20 frames of Dan Snaith rubbing his greased man-boobs, you probably won't be seeing any of these videos on MuchMusic. And that's too bad, because the Delicious 9 squad have concocted some pretty compelling visual accompaniment to Caribou's eclectic electronics.

It's all herky-jerky art school animation (with the Björk knob set to 11) but it's more effective at holding your attention than endless crotch shots and shakin' asses. (Yeah, I'm getting old and persnickety, so what?) You also get the bonus "Milk of Human Kindness" story which incorporates the videos into a fantastic story about seahorses, owls and murder. Having viewed it twice (before my DVD player began puking up a hairball) it strikes me as the kind of arty crap you'd put on as background visual noise at a party; it shows you're a sensitive guy with good taste and gives you a 23 per cent edge over the other hipsters trying to get a handjob from that waitress that works at Mosaics. Good luck with that. ★★★★ —WHITEY HUSTON

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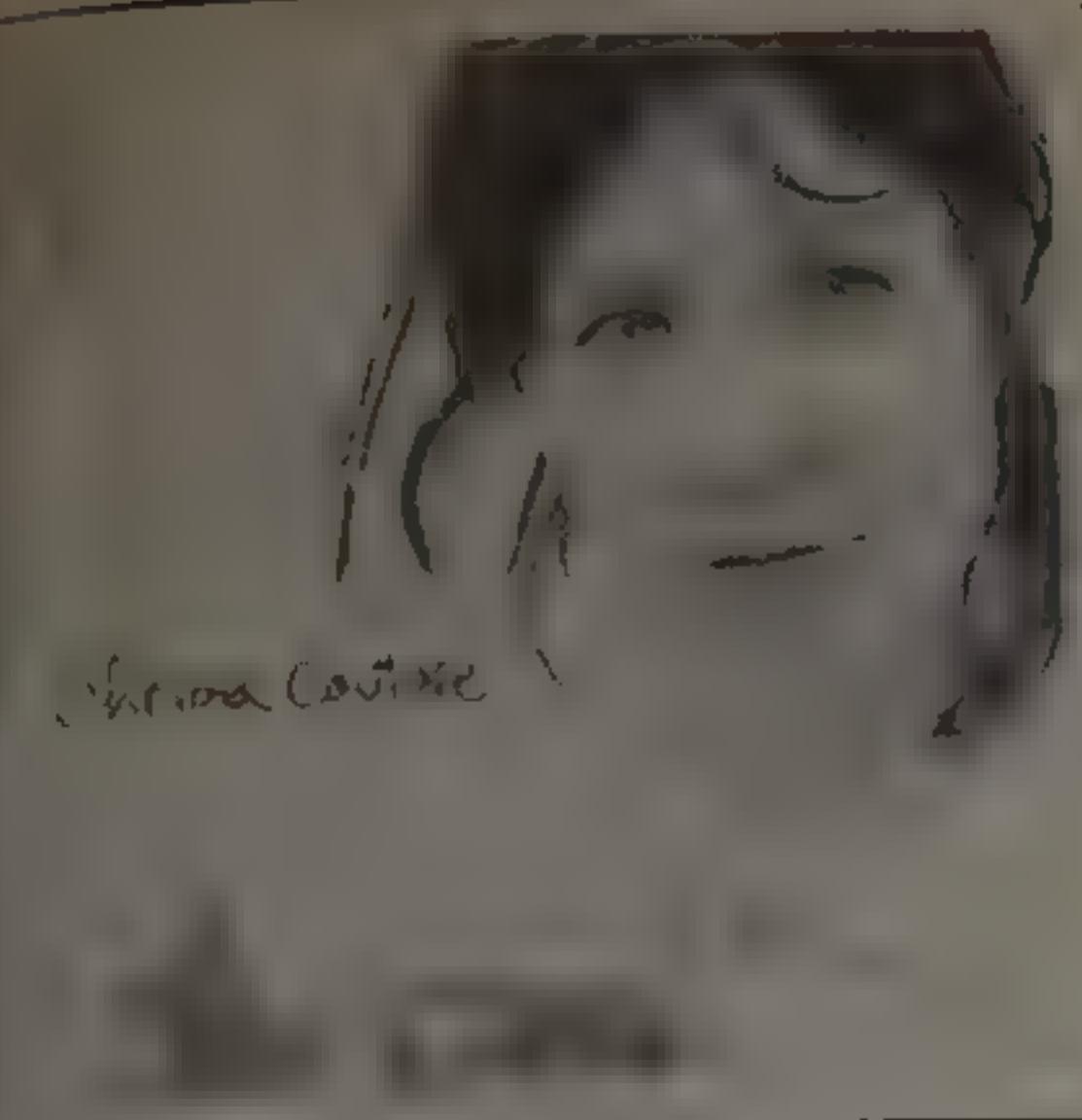
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CHRISTA COUTURE
FELL OUT OF OZ
(MAXIMUM)

Christa Couture's *Fell Out of Oz* plays like a dream where everything is heightened just a little too much to be comfortable. She knows exactly where to add emphasis in her songs, raising her voice at just the right time, but these spots have a tendency to stick out in Couture's otherwise relaxed tunes. The whole thing sounds so studied and rehearsed that it's difficult to find Couture's own personality in this collection of jewel-like songs, but one thing's for sure: mellow is the word of the day when it comes to Couture's music. "Jennifer Grey," for instance, is all about the relaxed, repetitive strumming of an acoustic guitar. The effect is hypnotic, but not in a particularly interesting way. What stands out the most on this track, though, is the way that the accompanying instruments are clumsily mixed — always sitting uncomfortably apart between guitar and drums.

The mix is better elsewhere, but the pattern of unassuming chord progressions and whispered vocals remains more or less intact. The best songs are those where Couture pushes herself to try something a little different, as with the slightly trippy sound of the title track, with its perfect pop chorus and energetic vocal work, and in the propulsive rhythm and cool electric licks of "Sundries Like Mondays." But then "Habitual" closes things out in the same unspectacular way that they began, leaving a pleasant impression that doesn't last long enough. ★★

—EDEN MUNRO

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The Now Sound Of Brazil 1...
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The Chronicles of Narnia (Walt Disney)
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John Fogerty
The Long Road Home (Fantasy)
Old king of swamp rock
Embraces CCR hits
Plus later blah-blah



BY STEVEN SANDOR

THIS WEEK: Matthias Kroller discusses Taj Mahal's *The Natch'l Blues*

When you ask a musician what album had the most influence on their musical career, you usually don't expect to get an answer right away. And that was certainly the case with Matthias Kroller, the singer and guitarist for Edmonton act Sally's Krackers, who, after much hemming and hawing, eventually settled on Taj Mahal's *The Natch'l Blues*.

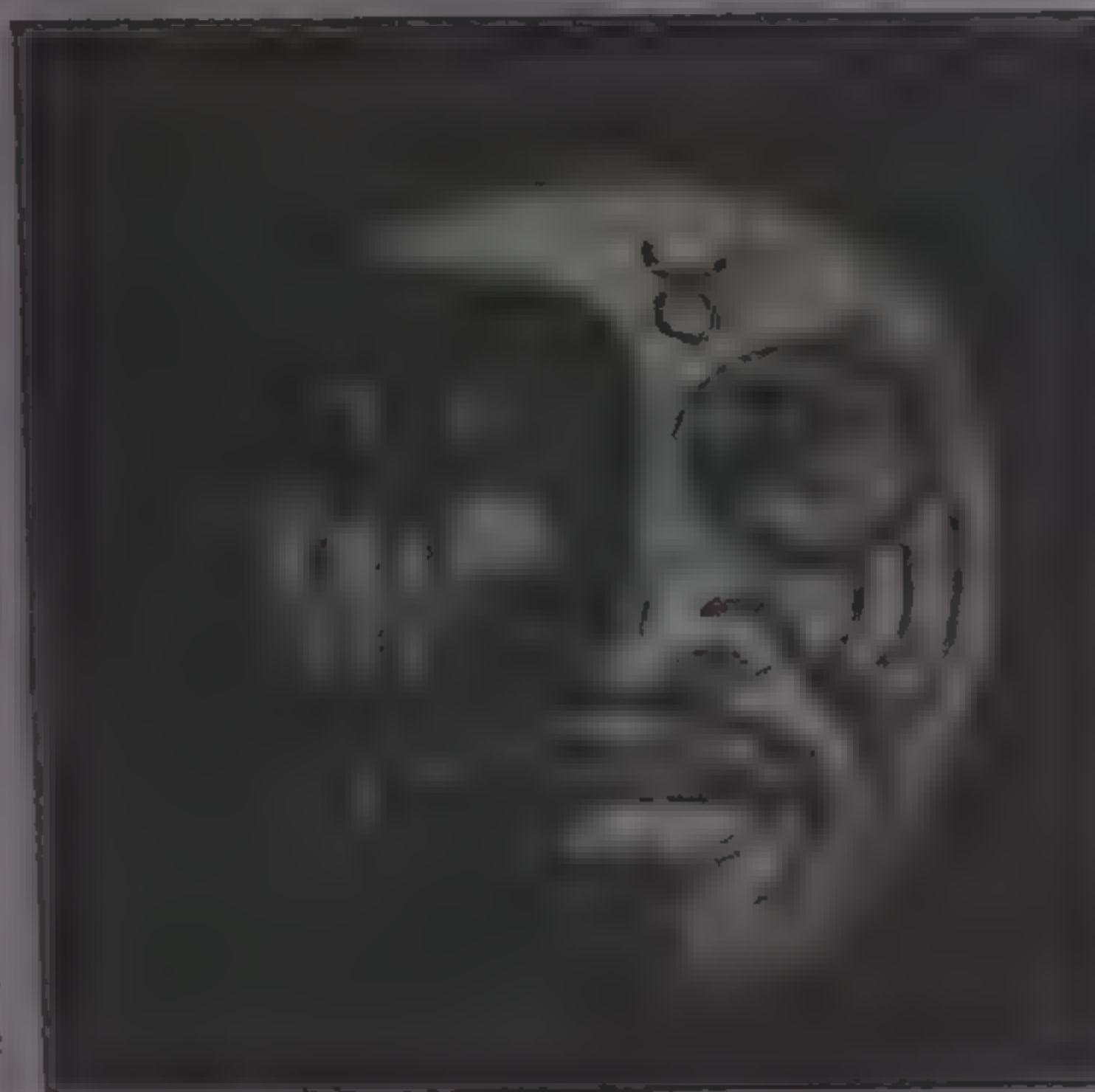
"Picking just one album and declaring it the 'most influential' on the band is nearly impossible," he says. "It changes from time to time, and each member has their own musical preferences. Sally's Krackers has been together for six years and even the music we are playing is hard to pin down. Two years ago we were alternative, now we are a blues band. Sometimes we sound funky, sometimes we sound country or gospel."

But considering Sally's Krackers' move to a more organic, blues-based sound, it's fitting that Kroller would choose an album that fuses that genre with a slew of American grassroots styles. "It's an excellent variety of gospel, blues, and folk," says Kroller. "I just can't get enough of it."

Taj Mahal (real name: Henry St. Clair Fredericks Jr.) gained notoriety in the mid- to late-'60s as a blues guitarist who also connected with the growing audience of psychedelic

rock fans of the time. Known for his collaborative work with some of the best-known session players of the time, including the screeching guitar work of Ry Cooder, Taj Mahal quickly became a blues legend. *The Natch'l Blues*, his second album, played a large part in creating a '60s blues revival. At the time, his habit of combining the blues with more obscure sounds such as Jamaican reggae, gospel and even country made some people scratch their heads, but now Taj Mahal is rightly considered not only a pioneer of blues fusion, but he's also hailed for preparing the listening public for a reggae and ska music invasion to follow in the '70s.

In fact, Taj Mahal's legend continues to grow decades after his musical heyday. His hometown of Springfield,



Massachusetts is working to honour him, and in June plans to have Taj Mahal officially recognized as the state's official blues songwriter.

But Kroller says there were plenty of other blues legends works that he also considered. "Aside from Taj, I love the Howlin' Wolf, Muddy Waters, Buddy Guy...and any album will do. As our own music is still evolving, our musical tastes also evolve."

To listen to a bunch of samples of Sally's Krackers' evolving blues-based sound, including excerpts of a live performance at the Sidetrack Café, go to sallyskrakers.com. □

BY WHITEY
AND T.B. PLAYER

Danko Jones
Sleep is the Enemy (Aquarius)
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Spitfire
Self-Help (Goodfellow)
Screams and noise! As if
A man's balls were caught in an
Old accordian

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- 32 - RELIANT K - WHO I AM HATES WHO I'VE BEEN
- 33 - JEFF HENDRICK - I JUST WANNA DANCE
- 34 - GWEN STEFANI - CRASH HEARD 'EM SAY
- 35 - MADONNA - SORRY
- 36 - CARL HENRY - I WISH

Revered pianist Kevin Cole and the ESO breathe new life into the classic works of the Gershwin brothers

BY SARAH CHAN

W here many sibling relationships are based on rivalry or friendly competition, few familial pairings have resulted in such dynamic and successful combinations as George and Ira Gershwin. Heralded for their beautifully original compositions and lyrics, the Gershwin brothers created music that fused jazz with classical and continues to hold a special place in people's hearts today.

George Gershwin was a revolutionary composer and pianist,

admired and respected by his contemporaries and revered for his legacy. Having produced such hits as "Porgy and Bess," "Lady, Be Good!" and "Girl Crazy," in addition to solo piano works like "Rhapsody in Blue," there are few people left unacquainted with his repertoire. One pianist, however, has made an entire career of interpreting Gershwin, and he will be doing so this upcoming weekend as part of the Edmonton Symphony Orchestra "Glorious Gershwin" celebration.

CLASSICAL

Kevin Cole has been described as the "best Gershwin pianist since Gershwin himself," by Edward Jablonski, a George Gershwin biographer, and his renditions of Gershwin have taken him on tour all over the world, produced multiple recordings with more on the horizon, and have made him a winner of many awards. "The vitality of the melodies and

chord combinations remain fresh to my ears 70 to 80 years after Gershwin's music was created," says Cole of the composer's enduring appeal. "George Gershwin's music and his brother Ira's lyrics capture moments that are simple and sophisticated at the same time, American in feel but with universal appeal.

"When playing the concert works, you cannot improve on what Gershwin wrote and played, period," he continues. "He built all the excitement and romance into his music. Some people are better at reading his road map than others. When I play his songs I do my own arrangements but because our approach to harmony and improvising at the keyboard are so similar, they sound like George."

A PERFORMER AT HEART, Cole's enthusiasm for the piano and his audience is palpable. "My favourite part about performing live is the audience," he says. "My job is to help everyone feel an emotional connection to whatever music I am playing. With the piano, I have a wide dynamic range and tonal color palette at my fingertips. I love the way a piano can sound like an orchestra, all by itself."

Cole's appetite for his instrument and the music of great American songwriters will continue to be fed with his upcoming series of "Cole plays..." recordings, which will include performances of the work of Harold Arlen, Jerome Kern, Hugh Martin, Richard Rodgers, Cole Porter and Irving Berlin, over the next two years. His very next recording, however, will be his debut vocal album.

Besides Gershwin, Cole draws inspiration from other composers such as Duke Ellington and classical artists like Debussy, Ravel, Grieg, Chopin, Rachmaninoff, Lehar and Sousa. All great masters of piano composition, it's easy to see how Cole has become such an accomplished artist who remains true to the development of his performance. It's truly inspirational to come across an artist such as Cole who still gets excited about each melody, each harmony, improvising and connecting with his listeners.

This infectious enthusiasm is likely one of the many reasons why Cole has been asked to return to the Winspear for his third visit. "It's exciting and magical," Cole says of his performances with the Edmonton Symphony Orchestra. "And being asked back is always a good sign! I have to say that the orchestra makes music leap off the page and that is very exciting. Their superb artistic administrator, Rob McAlear, can program an evening of music better than anyone. The ESO took a chance with me and I am hoping the word spreads so that I may perform all over glorious Canada."

There really is no gamble involved with seeing Cole perform Gershwin live, so play it safe and ensure yourself a dazzling time with Cole and the ESO. ☺

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From the vaults

Anne Whitelaw uncovers the Art Gallery of Alberta's acquisition habits in *Building a Collection*

BY DARREN ZENKO

Somewhere around the turn of the century (the most recent one), art history and visual culture professor Anne Whitelaw, having just started teaching at the University of Alberta, had an idea at the Edmonton Art Gallery.

"They had a collection show," she recalls, "and the way it was organized was by period of production rather than period of acquisition, which is the normal way most museums do their collection shows: 'Here are our Greatest Hits, our Masterpieces, and we'll start with the 19th century and we'll move into the present day.'

"At the time," she continues, "I was teaching a course on theories of exhibition, so I took my class down, and we're walking through and I asked, 'What are some other ways

they could've organized this show?' And then I started thinking, 'How would I do this show?'"

Her answer to that question, plus five years of research, has resulted in *Building a Collection: 80 Years at the Edmonton Art Gallery* at the newly-renamed Art Gallery of Alberta, a retrospective that brings 120 seldom-seen works up out of the vaults and presents them not in the order they were created, but in the order they were acquired by (or were

PREVIEW

VISUAL ARTS

left in baskets on the doorstep of) the Gallery. Taken from the AGA's 5,500-piece permanent collection and grouped according to major changes in the Gallery's leadership, these works along with Whitelaw's explanatory text create a portrait of a gallery, a city, a scene and the shifting priorities, concerns and tastes of 80 years of institutional art in the capital.

"The life of a gallery is dependent on a number of different things," Whitelaw says. "In part, it's the taste of the director, and in part it's how much money you have."

Wide variations in both those factors have resulted in a collection Whitelaw describes simply—after a long pause, and with a grin—as "eclectic."

"In the first 40 or 50 years they were quite reliant on donations," she explains, "on what people could give them.... whatever they could get. What's really interesting about that early period, and it's a lot like the contemporary period, is they would collect contemporary art. So, they would collect A.Y. Jackson, who was at that point a contemporary artist. And the artists would donate work to the gallery, because it was the museum and they thought it was important to get recognition.... or, they'd sell it; in 1926 the gallery bought an A.Y. Jackson for \$125."

THE INSTITUTION that would become the Edmonton Art Gallery began when members of the Edmonton Art Club, which continues to be a society of Edmonton artists, got together in 1923 and decided that this growing prairie town needed to have a museum and an art gallery.

"Initially it was a museum; generally they wanted to collect not only fine art objects but historical

objects," Whitelaw explains. "They received a lot of donations, and some of it was really important work and others weren't so interesting and don't really have so much value now. It was the institution. The Royal Alberta Museum didn't exist yet—that was a Centennial project; the Glenbow didn't exist yet. So people just sent stuff to the Edmonton Museum of Art."

As much as Whitelaw's retrospective is about the growth of the collection, it's about the people that have nurtured that growth, like the Women's Society of the Edmonton Art Gallery. "Initially [the Society] was just raising interest in the museum," Whitelaw says, "getting people to come to exhibits. They would have social teas, lunches, Sunday afternoon musicals, and this was all held in the rooms of the museum.

"What I find, having done a lot of work on a lot of museums across Canada, is that most of these museums wouldn't exist without these women, the 'ladies who lunch,' who put in huge amounts of unpaid time and energy doing everything from bingos—of course—to balls, lunches, arts and crafts sales.... all these tiny

little things that managed to raise money for purchases. Sometimes it was just to keep the museum open, but in the '70s and '80s there was money for core operation, so all this money went to fund acquisitions."

In the course of researching the retrospective, Whitelaw pored over 60 years' worth of Board minutes and gallery documents, getting to know the people and the politics in those dusty pages, living vicariously the small miracle of a decent collection of important art taking root, growing and flourishing in a frontier town in the middle of nowhere.

"In the early years," she says, "every year there was an annual report on what the museum or gallery was doing. And Maude Bowman, who was the first president and then the first director of the museum until '43, would constantly say, 'Why are we doing this? Nobody's coming to our exhibitions. Edmontonians don't care.' And then the next year: 'All these people came! This is really important!'"

BUILDING A COLLECTION: 80 YEARS AT THE EDMONTON ART GALLERY
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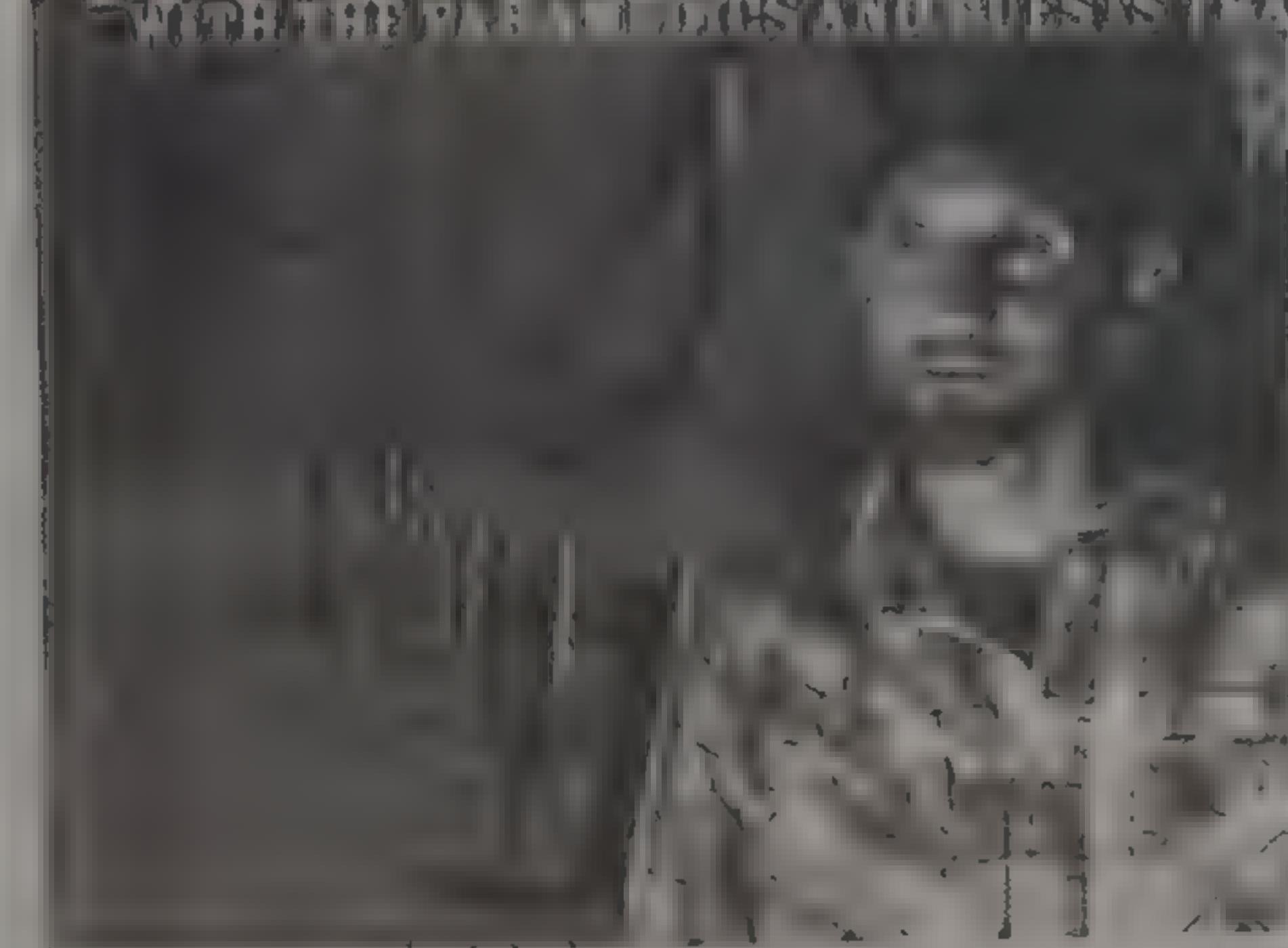
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Pearls of wisdom

Coralie Cairns goes on an eye-opening search for *Helen's Necklace*

BY PAUL MATWYCHUK

The final word in Carole Fréchette's play *Helen's Necklace* is "Yalla!"—a word the rest of the play has trained us to recognize as the Arabic equivalent of "Onward!" or "Let's go!" or "Giddyup!" It's a word that actress Coralie Cairns (who plays Helen in Shadow Theatre's new production of the play) seems to have adopted as her personal motto. During our interview, she

can barely keep still in her chair: she leaps to her feet when she describes the play as "a great adventure"; she reaches out to touch my leg when she talks about Fréchette's beautiful sense of empathy for "the poetry of general human loss"; she presses a copy of an interview with the play's translator, John Murrell, into my

THEATRE

hands, the page covered with penciled-in asterisks and underlinings—and all the while she apologizes for what she supposes is her hopeless inarticulateness.

"To actually climb inside Helen's skin," she says, "this lovely, flawed, well-meaning woman.... I just love

her, and the little journey she goes on is absolutely delightful to play. It starts out as a mystery—you even start to wonder, 'Aren't they ever going to tell us what city she's in or what she's doing there?' But over the course of the play, a shift takes place without you even noticing it and all those specifics just fall away and no longer seem important. It just glides so gently away.... Does that even make sense? You'll be able to explain it better, right?" She hides her head in her hands. "This is why I act and don't write—I babble and bumble around. I know what I feel, but I don't know how to say it properly."

It's appropriate, then, that one of the main themes in *Helen's Necklace* is the lack of communication between the Third World and the

West. The story, which is set in an unnamed Arab city devastated by bombings and poverty, is deceptively simple: Helen, who's in town for some unspecified conference, hires a cabdriver named Nabil to help her look for a beloved pearl necklace she's misplaced somewhere during her stay. Helen doesn't speak the local language, but her search nevertheless brings her into intimate contact with several residents of the town, all of whom have suffered enormous personal losses that at first make Helen's missing necklace pale in significance.

"It isn't about some selfish Canadian woman who loses a bauble, and isn't that terrible compared to the losses of other people in the world," explains John Sproule, the show's director. "It would be a big mistake to do it that way."

"No, it's what the necklace represents that's important," Cairns says. "It's what that little thing made her feel, and now she's lost it. The loss is unimportant, but you still feel it; there's a beautiful little line which she speaks and which I just love where she asks, 'Have you ever invented a tragic history for yourself because your little private grief suddenly seems so indecent?'"

STARRING OPPOSITE CAIRNS as every character she meets—everyone from Nabil to a gruff construction foreman to a street vagrant to the still-grieving mother of a dead child—is Mark Meer, arguably Edmonton's leading improv star, getting a rare chance to deliver a performance that doesn't rely principally on his comic talents. "It's not that there aren't moments in the play and elements of the characters that are funny," Sproule says. "But what Mark really brings to the show is that improviser's ability to say 'yes' to circumstances: 'Yes, I'm going to go here.' And he just goes; it's a remarkable skill set that he has. Coralie and Mark have very different approaches, but they work so well together—there's not many people, after all, who've worked the Varscona stage more often than those two."

But it was Cairns's memories of

appearing on another stage—dancing in Christmas shows for U.N. peace-keeping troupes in Egypt and Cyprus way back in 1977—that she found even more valuable as she prepared for this production. "It was quite heartbreaking," she says. "When we were in Cyprus, we performed in the Ledra Palace, which is this beautiful fancy hotel. In the play, Helen talk about putting her fingers in the bullet holes in the buildings, and I actually did that—it was so weird as a Westerner and as young as I was to see that and realize, 'This is real.'"

"It's interesting," Sproule says. "When you try, just as a person, to understand other people of the world who are afraid their children will be shot on the way to school and so on and try to imagine what that would be like—in some ways, that's what actors try to do when we try to play a character who's feeling emotions beyond anything we've ever experienced ourselves."

Cairns agrees, but points once again to the interview with John Murrell, saying he expresses what she means better than she could. "There's a lament for life's limitations [in the play]," I read, "for how small it all seems, and at the same time, equally strongly, there's an exultation about the fact that life doesn't have to have any limits."

Cairns smiles at me, and for that moment anyway, her love for this play does indeed seem limitless. ☀

HELEN'S NECKLACE

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theatre notes

BY JOSEF BRAUN,
DAVID BERRY AND
CAROLYN NIKODYM

Strindberg variations

Play Strindberg • Red Strap Market • Jan 19-28 • preVUE With *Play Strindberg*, the late Swiss author Friedrich Dürrenmatt set out to rewrite August Strindberg's *The Dance*

with, re-envisioning it as a more compact and irreverent portrait of a failing marriage, shaping its already weak comic elements into something more fiendishly aligned with his own particular wicked sensibilities. Directed by Amy DeFelice and starring Matthew Kloster, Andrew Mecready and Melissa Thingelstad, Image Theatre's new production of *Play Strindberg* promises audiences an evening of revenge, murder, betrayal and... Passion dancing.

"This one is definitely much more farcical, much more grotesque than the source material," explains DeFelice. "Things begin in the same place but wind up somewhere very, very different."

A military officer and his failed actress wife live over an abandoned prison on an isolated island, trapped in their cycle of manipulation and hostility, until a relative arrives and becomes a pawn in their scheming against one and other. These raw narrative elements are shared by both *Dance of Death* and *Play Strindberg*, but everything in Dürrenmatt's adaptation, from the plot to the dialogue to the set itself, is condensed, stripped back to its bare essentials. In Image Theatre's production, the spare, lean play installs itself nicely between the four pillars that define their playing space in the Red Strap Market. "We were trying to go for the boxing ring as much as possible," DeFelice says with a laugh.

Dürrenmatt has said that he saw a production of *Dance of Death* in 1948 that he apparently found boring. Twenty years later he decided to rewrite it during a period in which he seemed especially engaged in writing adaptations. "However, you can't always believe the things Dürrenmatt said in interviews," DeFelice warns. "While some of the ideas he suggests are original, others are clearly in the Strindberg text already."

In a recent Broadway revival, starring Ian McKellan, Helen Mirren and David Strathairn, critics routinely noted how *Dance of Death* now seems like a precursor to the sort of marital antagonisms clawing at heart of a lot of classic 20th century American drama, especially Edward Albee's *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* DeFelice is quick to make this same connection, pointing out the mounting astringent humour connecting the three plays, as well as the volatile yet vivid central relationship.

"Despite all the games that the characters play in both versions of this story," DeFelice says, "they really do love each other in some way. And they're really well suited to each other. You almost think that if they'd had just a little more money or if circumstances had played out just a little more in their favour, they wouldn't have had to entertain themselves by relentlessly tormenting each other." (JB)

Band o' barflies

Absolute Blue • Living Room Play House • To Jan 28 • reVUE A group

of disparate people trapped in a confined space: as far as dramatic premises go, you'd be hard-pressed to find one tread more often. In the case of Azimuth Theatre's *Absolute Blue*, the characters are bar regulars looking to turn their lives around by forming a rock band. Brothers Keith (Bob Rasco) and Cole (Aaron Macri, who also provides the music) have seedy histories, but a traumatic experience has turned Keith onto the path of righteousness, and he hopes to drag his brother and a few lost souls from his neighbourhood pub—depressed alcoholic Sandra (Vanessa Sabourin), flaky waitress Tracy (Kristi Hansen) and tag-along/poncho-wearing slacker Dov (Murray Utas)—along with him.

When a freak blizzard hits and the lights and heat go out—both for the characters and the audience, in a bit of what you might call theatre verité—they all have to come to grips with themselves and one another. Unfortunately, it's here where the play falters, as the three playwrights seem to have trouble coaxing the type of deep-searching truth out of their characters these trapped-in-a-room pieces need to be effective.

It's not so much what's there as what isn't. While the dialogue has an organic feel to it and the quintet of actors does a fine job of playing off one another, a few important monologues, particularly as the group is sharing stories, feel more written than spoken, which hurts their emotional resonance somewhat.

The bigger problem, though, is that the characters and their various troubles don't seem to get as much attention as how they're trying to deal with their situation, which is realistic, I suppose, but not entirely satisfying. Hansen's pot-smoking waitress, for instance, is in an affair with a dinner-theatre floor manager who doesn't want to be anything more than fuck buddies. But all we really get of her exploring this is some angst over unreturned phone calls and a story/song about a man she cheated with; it's never clear whether she's given it much thought, short of being berated by Sandra, who has relationship problems of her own that get resolved in an awkward dream

sequence. The relationship between Keith and Cole, ostensibly the impetus for the whole thing, usually takes a back-burner to storytelling or dealing with the weather, and ends up feeling not so much unresolved as unexplored. Dov is there for little more than comic relief—the most poignant thing said about or by him is that he "talks like he's from California when he's really from Wetaskawin."

There's certainly potential for more, though, and a crew of people capable of bringing it out. With a little more focus on the characters themselves, and a touch less on their actual situation, there's definitely something there. Right now, though, it just feels a touch well, cold. (DB)

Fully committed

Last Friday night, 18 intrepid playwrights were busy typing away in the U of A's Dinwoodie Lounge, hoping to come away a winner of the 10 Days of Madness Playwriting Festival. In 24 hours, their masterpieces were completed, and with 48 hours, the two winners were announced, and a hearty round of congratulations is in order for both Aaron Adams (for his play *The Douche Bag*) and Vue's own Paul Matwychuk (for his work *Good King Wenceslas*). Readings of all the works have been taking place this week, but the you can catch Adams's on January 20 and Matwychuk's on January 21, both at 8 p.m. and both at the Arts Barns's Westbury Theatre. (CN) (V)

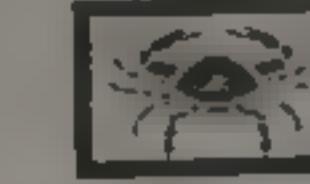
your efforts to protect and nurture yourself.



GEMINI

May 21 - June 20

Having ridden my mountain bike through Marin County's hills for years, I've watched Mt. Tamalpais go through endless changes. Depending on the weather, the season, and the time of day, it has been a different mountain on each occasion I've seen it. When the low-slung sun illuminates the thin layer of mist covering it late on a winter afternoon, for example, I can't believe it's the same mountain that lies beneath a full moon beaming down on it through a hole in the streaming clouds on a summer night. The poet in me says I'd be justified in giving it a new name on each of the thousands of times I've been in its presence. If you're honest, Gemini, you know that my relationship with Mt. Tamalpais is very much like your experience of the people you see every day. They're always fresh, always different from who they were last time. This is an ideal time to acknowledge and celebrate that mystery.



CANCER

June 21 - July 22

Two people in Evansville, Indiana were exploring an office building they wanted to buy. To the surprise of the owner, they discovered the structure had a second story that had been closed up for decades. The three of them gained access to the hidden area and found business papers that had last touched human hands in 1931. According to my analysis of the astrological omens, Cancerian, you will soon make a similar find. Sealed-off parts of your world you didn't know existed will become available for your inspection.



LEO

July 23 - Aug 22

The Galactic Question Centre at Galquest.blogspot.com asks you to imagine



VIRGO

Aug 23 - Sept 22

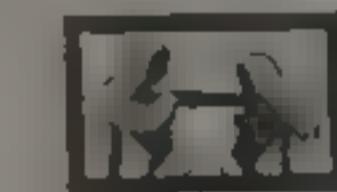
Burton Butler is Northern California's top Skunk Whisperer. Because he has developed a special rapport with skunks, he's often called on by spooked suburbanites to safely remove the critters when they take up residence in basements and garages. I believe you will have an analogous talent in the coming weeks, Virgo. Due to your smart, unsentimental brand of sensitivity, you will be able to defuse potentially smelly problems with little or no damage to either the stinker or stinkies.



LIBRA

Sept 23 - Oct 22

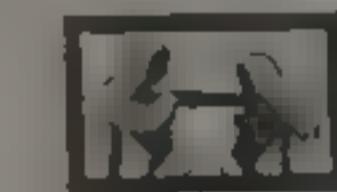
In the science fiction film *Contact*, Jodie Foster plays a scientist who's chosen as an astronaut for a solo trip to an alien world far from our solar system. As she careens through a staggering array of sublime celestial phenomena, she muses aloud to herself, half crying, "It's so beautiful... so beautiful.... They should have sent a poet." To properly understand and appreciate the experiences that lie ahead for you, Libra, adopt her advice: Awaken the poet within you, and let him or her lead the way as you go on your adventures. You say you don't have an inner poet? I disagree. We all have one. It's the part of you that thinks like the moon,



SCORPIO

Oct 23 - Nov 21

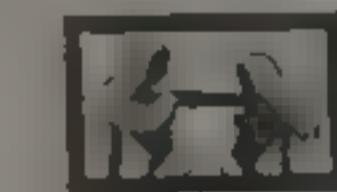
In her *San Francisco Chronicle* column, Leah Garchik reported that a woman shopping at a local Safeway grocery store had heard "Blitzkrieg Bop," a snarling anthem by the Ramones, playing over the loudspeaker. Was it an unfortunate development that besmirched the integrity of the seminal punk band, or a welcome sign that what was once raw rebel squawk is infiltrating the mainstream? You're ready to entertain an analogous question that pertains to your own personal quest for authenticity, Scorpio. Should you compromise a little so as to inject your influence into a setting where it's desperately needed? Or should you remain aloof and pure, content to affect mostly just those who already agree with you?



SAGITTARIUS

Nov 22 - Dec 21

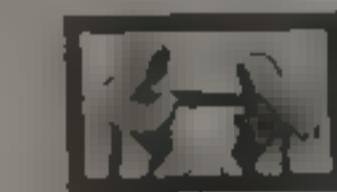
This should not be a race-down-an-eight-lane-superhighway kind of week, Sagittarius. From what I can tell, it's got to be an exploratory-meander-down-a-bunch-of-dirt-roads kind of week. In order to be exposed to what's important for you to learn, you'll have to take the scenic route through back country. Please don't be in a hurry. Regard the muddy patches and potholes as your allies. It's high time to slow down and smell the cow manure, which might be more accurately referred to as fertilizer.



CAPRICORN

Dec 22 - Jan 18

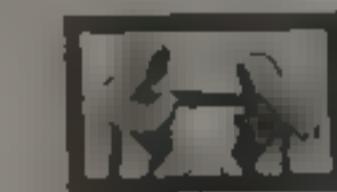
A psychologist in the U.K. believes that January 24 is the "most depressing day of the year," at least in the Northern Hemisphere. Cliff Arnall, whose specialty is seasonal disorders, says this day is typically a low point, when glum feelings generated by overcast



AQUARIUS

Jan 20 - Feb 18

A guy I met in a bar in New York's Lower East Side discoursed at length on the psycho-spiritual meaning of *The Wizard of Oz*. "The Wicked Witch of the West was Dorothy's greatest teacher," he told me. "The witch's animosity compelled her to learn new tricks, master her circumstances, and ultimately find her way home." I hope that lately you have been benefiting from your own personal version of the Wicked Witch, Aquarius, and I trust that you will soon graduate from your need for the lessons he or she has provided.



PISCES

Feb 19 - Mar 20

Krakow, Poland hasn't had a full-time rabbi on duty since the events of World War II decimated the once-thriving Jewish population. Recently that changed with the arrival of Rabbi Avraham Flaks from Israel. He has promised to help build solidarity in the small Jewish community that has arisen since the fall of Communism and the end of the Polish government's unofficial policy of anti-Semitism. I foresee a comparable development in your own life, Pisces. You are poised to experience a reawakening of spiritual impulses that have been dormant for some time. If you follow the clues you'll be given, it's quite possible that a teacher, leader, or other inspirational influence will come to catalyze further excitement.

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VUEWEEKLY

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JANUARY 19-25, 2006

ARTS WEEKLY

Fax your free listings to 426-2889
or e-mail Glenys at
listings@vneweweekly.com
Deadline is Friday at 3pm

DANCE

CHEREMOSH...REVOLUTIONS! Jubilee Auditorium (451-8000) • Jan. 20-21 (8pm) • \$40 at TicketMaster

DANCE MOTIF 2006 Myer Horowitz Theatre, U of A (492-0770/492-2231) • Presented by Orchensis Dance Group featuring choreographer Kathy Ochoa as well as works by Tamara Bliss, Kathy Metzger-Cormeau, Tina Covlin-Dewart, Laura Krewski, and student choreographers. Jan. 27-28 (8pm) • \$10 (adv)/\$12 (door)

PULSE Arden Theatre, 5 St. Anne Street, St. Albert (459-1542/451-8000) • Live music and dance show presented by Decidedly Jazz Danceworks • Jan. 31, Feb. 1 (8pm) • \$23.50 (adult)/\$18.50 (student) at Arden Theatre box office, TicketMaster

Illustrations by Raymond Biesinger • Until Feb. 4

MANDOLIN BOOKS 6419-112 Ave (479-4050) • Photographs by Olya Zaripina • Until Jan. 31

MCMULLEN GALLERIES U of A Hospital, 8440-112 St (407-7152) • Open Mon-Fri 10am-8pm; Sat-Sun 1-8pm • **FIVE DEFINITIONS OF SPIRIT:** Artworks by Allison Argy-Burgess, Roger Bellier, Sharon Moore-Foster, Teresa Halkow with musical composition by John Caverly, curated by Robert Sinclair • Until Jan. 29

MCPAG 5411-51 St, Stony Plain (963-2777) • Open Mon-Sat 10am-4pm; Sun 10am-6:30pm • **SEEING THROUGH TREES:** Drawings by Gerald St. Maur; until Feb. 12 **Dining Room Gallery:** Paintings by Eva Nolan; until Jan. 19

MUDGY WATERS CAFÉ 8211-111 St (966-8612) • Artworks by Rebecca Schroeder • Until Jan. 28

MUSÉE HÉRITAGE MUSEUM 5 St. Anne Street, St. Albert (459-1528) • Open: Mon-Sat 10am-5pm; Sun 1-5pm • **SCOUTING FOR INDIANS:** Photographs by Jeffrey Thomas • Until Feb. 26

NINA MAGGERTY CENTRE FOR THE ARTS Stollery Gallery, 9702-111 Ave (474-7611) • Open Mon-Fri 10am-2:30pm; Tue 6:30-8:30pm, Thu 6-8pm • **MOTIVATIONS:** Artworks by Sudan born artist Emmanuel Bara Layila • Until Feb. 10 • Opening reception, artist in attendance: Thu, Jan. 19 (4-7pm)

PICTURE THIS GALLERY 959 Ordze Rd, Sherwood Park (467-3038) • Artworks by Brent Heighton, John Eversen, Roger Arndt, Vance Theoret, Murray Phillips, Frank Grisdale and Andrew Pfannmuller • Until Jan. 31

PROFILES PUBLIC ART GALLERY 19 Perron Street, St. Albert (460-4310) • Open: Tue-Sat (10am-5pm), Thu (10am-6pm) • **IN SEQUENCE:** Artworks by Joseph Anderson Terry Reynoldson, Kelly Johnsen and Michael Coolidge; until Mar. 3 • **ArtVentures:** On your mark, get set art; for children 6-12yrs; Jan. 21 (1-4pm); \$2/child

REYNOLDS-ALBERTA MUSEUM 2km W of Wetaskiwin, Hwy 13 (780-361-1351/1-800-661-4726) • Open: Tue-Sun 10am-5pm • **LIFE AND TIMES OF THE MOTORCYCLE:** Until Sept. 17, 2006 • \$9 (adult)/\$7 (youth)/\$5 (child)/free (child six and under)

ROYAL ALBERTA MUSEUM 12845-102 Ave (453-9100) • Open Mon-Sun 9am-5pm • **QUEENS OF THE COURT: THE EDMONTON GRADS:** until Feb. 12

SNAP GALLERY 10309-97 St (423-1492) • Open Tue-Sat 12-5pm • **AND NOW, THEN OTHERWISE:** Printworks suggesting the idea of time and temporal release by Toronto artist David Armstrong • Until Feb. 18 • Reception, artist in attendance: Thu, Feb. 16 (7-9pm)

STUDIO GALLERY 2ND LOCATION 11 Perron Street, St. Albert (460-5993) • Open: Tue-Fri 10am-6pm, Sat 10am-5pm • **NEW BOUNDARIES:** Artworks by Bruce Allen, Carla Beerens, Douglas Fraser, Sharri Honey, Susanne Tous, Linda Wilder and other artists • Until February

VAAA GALLERY 3rd Fl, Harcourt House, 10215-112 St (421-1731) • Open Mon-Fri 10am-4pm • **IMPRESSIONS:** Paintings by Beemie Hippel and photographs by Robert Michiel • Until Feb. 4

VANDERELIE GALLERY 10183-112 St (452-0286) • Open Tue-Sat 10am-5:30pm • **Featuring new artworks by Phil Darrah, David Alexander, Greg Hardy, Sara MacCulloch, Robert Christie, Robert Scott, David Cantine, Susana Espinoza, Susan Owen-Kagan, Isla Burns, Karen Cantine and Ken Macklin:** Through January

WORKS GALLERY Commerce Place, Main Fl, 10150 Jasper Ave (426-2122) • Open: Mon-Fri noon-5pm • **FROST:** Locally designed contemporary furniture by the Industrial Designers of Edmonton Association • Until Feb. 3

LITERARY

AUDREYS BOOKS 10702 Jasper Ave (423-3487) • Book launch of Laura Elise Taylor's new book *A Taste For Paprika*; Tue, Jan. 24 (7:30pm); free • **Greg Balanowski-Dickson**, author of *Tips and Traps When Buying A Business*, talks on successfully buying and financing an established small business or franchise; Thu, Jan. 26 (7:30pm); free

BLACK DOG FREE HOUSE The Underdog (basement) • Wild Prose Country: Stories by Shauna Mooseback, Lynn Coady, Ben Lof, T.L. Cowan, Thea Bowering, and Alison Sivak • Tue, Jan. 24 (7pm door, 8pm show) • Free

CBC CENTRE STAGE Broadcast Centre, Edmonton City Centre Mall (468-7440) • CBC Edmonton's 2006 Poetry Face-Off hosted by Peter Brown of Radio Active • Thu, Jan. 26 (noon)

CHAPTERS-ST. ALBERT 445 St. Albert Rd, Unit 30, St. Albert (419-7114) • Reading and signing by Robert J. Sawyer, author of *Mindscan* and *Flash Forward* • Sat, Jan. 28 (5-7pm)

CITY ARTS CENTRE 10943-84 Ave (433-2932) • TALES story tellarounds • 2nd Fri each month

DEWEY'S LOUNGE Power Plant, U of A Campus • Book launch of *Fresh Tracks* featuring readings by T. Bowering, B. Romanik, J. Odor, S. Benning, music by Trevor Tchir follows • Thu, Jan. 19 (7:30pm) • Free

NAKED CYBER CAFÉ 10354 Jasper Ave • Music, poetry, and performance art open stage hosted by the Naked Electric Orchestra • Every Thu (8pm)

THE UPPER CRUST CAFÉ 10909-86 Ave (467-3878) • Poet's Haven: weekly reading series, upcoming are local poets Patti Sinclair, Tricia Eddy, Harold Cashman and hosted by Dijie Ratzlaff. Followed by an open mike • \$5 (incl. coffee, tea, dessert) • Mon, Jan. 23 (7pm)

LIVE COMEDY

THE COMEDY FACTORY 3414 Gateway Boulevard (469-4999) • Thu 8:30pm, Fri 8:30pm, Sat 8pm and 10:30pm • **Wes Zaharuk:** Jan. 19-21 • **Darryl Mak:** Jan. 26-28

THE COMIC STRIP 1646 Bourbon St, WEM, 8882-170 St (483-5999) • Show times nightly at 8pm; weekends 8pm and 10:30pm • From BET's *Comic View* and *Showtime at the Apollo*: Dean Austin; along with guest MC Kelly Taylor and Marty McLean; Jan. 19-22 • **Get Hypnotized!** With hypnotist Sebastian Steele; Tue, Jan. 24

• **Improv Extravaganza with Skit For Brains** along with the Fresh Faces of Stand-Up; Wed, Jan. 25 • **Wayne Hemming, Dez Reel**, special guests; Jan. 26-29 • **Comedy for a Cause:** featuring Wayne Hemming; in support of the Seniors Volunteer Driving Centre; Thu, Jan. 26 (7pm door, 8pm show); \$16

THEATRESPORTS Varscona Theatre, 10329-83 Ave (448-0695) • Rapid Fire Theatre weekly improv show every Friday at 11pm • \$10

YUK YUK'S KOMEDY KABARET Londonderry Mall (481-9857) • Wed/Thu 8pm, Fri/Sat 8pm and 10pm • **Wed, Pro AM Comedy Jam** with Kevin McGrath • Wet Spots: Jan. 19-21 • **Johnny 'Bagpipes' Johnston's** fundraising event, Wed, Jan. 25 and Thu, Jan. 26 • Proceeds go to an elementary school in South Africa

THEATRE

CHIMPROV Varscona Theatre, 10329-83 Ave (433-3399) • Comedy improv every Sat 11pm (except Jan. 21) Saturday of the month

CANADIAN GRAFFITI Jubilations Dinner Theatre WEM, Phase III, Upper Level, 22253, 8882-170 St (484-2424) • Until Jan. 21

DIE-NASTY Varscona Theatre 10329-83 Ave (433-3399) • Directed by Dana Andersen. **Intrigue**, passion and shenanigans abound in Edmonton's live improvised soap opera • Every Mon (8pm) until May 29 • \$10 • Tickets at the door

EVERYBODY LOVES RAY'S MOM Jubilations Dinner Theatre, 8882-170 St (484-2424) • A successful sportswriter, Ray Baritone, lives happily on Long Island, with his wife, Debra. They live right next door to the out spoken mother Marie and his caustic father Harry. Ray also has a rather neurotic older brother Robert, who is married to the excitable Amy. So what happens when Ray's Mother Marie announces that they all are going to have to live together under one roof? • Jan. 27-Apr. 2

FULLY COMMITTED Citadel Theatre, Rice Theatre, 8928-101A Ave (425-1820) • Comedy by Becky Mode, starring John Kirkpatrick, directed by James DeFelice • Sam mans the telephone reservation line at New York's hottest restaurant. As Sam juggles scheming socialites, name-dropping wannabes, fickle celebrities and egomaniacal bosses, he is also trying to sort out his own life and career as an out-of-work actor who is on the verge of making the big time. • Jan. 24-Feb. 12

THE GLASS MENAGERIE Catalyst Theatre, 8529 Gateway Boulevard (431-1750) • **Kill Your TV** presents Tennessee Williams' *The Glass Menagerie* directed by Kevin Sulley and stars Nathan Cirkow, Beth Graham, Chris Bulloch and Marianne Copithorne • Until Jan. 21 (8pm), Saturdays (4pm) • \$16/12; Two-For-One-Tues; opening night gala: \$20 • Tickets available at TIX on the Square

THE GOLDEN AGE OF ROCK, POP AND DOO WOP Mayfield Dinner Theatre, Mayfield Inn, 16615-109 Ave (483-4051) • Until Feb. 12

THE HAPPY PRINCE TransAlta Arts Barns, Westbury Theatre, 10330-84 Ave (448-9000) • Presented by the MacRobert Productions (Scotland) • Two rival story tellers scour an enchanted park hunting for clues that will lead them to the Happy Prince story • Jan. 27-Feb. 5 • Recommended for ages 4-9 • Tickets available at the Fringe Theatre Adventures box office

THE HAPPY PRINCE Horizon Stage, 1001 Calhoun Road, Spruce Grove (962-8995/451-8000) • Oscar Wilde's children's classic presented by the Scottish Theatre Troupe • Jan. 21 (2pm) • \$8 at the Horizon Stage box office

THE HAPPY PRINCE Arden Theatre • An adaptation of Oscar Wilde's fairytale directed by Annie Wood performed by the Scottish Theatre Company MacRobert Productions • The Prince must convince a bright swallow to postpone his migration to help the people who are suffering in the city below • Sun, Jan. 22 (1pm and 3:30pm)

HELEN'S NECKLACE Varscona Theatre, 10329-83 Ave (434-5564/420-1757) • By Carole Fréchette, translated by John Murrell, presented by Shadow Theatre • Helen's search for the irreplaceable lost necklace, through a war shattered Middle Eastern city is a voyage through human experience • Jan. 19-Feb. 5 • \$16 (adult)/\$13 (student/senior) Tue-Thu 8pm, Sun 2pm; \$20 (adult)/\$17 (student/senior) Fri Sat 8pm, Pay-What-You-Can Sat 2pm; Tuesdays Two-For-One. Tickets available at TIX on the Square

I AM MY OWN WIFE Citadel MacLab Theatre, 8928-101A Ave (425-1820) • Based on a true story about Lothar Berfelde by Doug Wright, starring John Uliyatt directed by James MacDonald • Charlotte von Mahlsdorf (Lothar Berfelde), a German transvestite who lived through Nazi Germany, survived and continued her lifelong pursuit of sexual liberty and antique furniture • Jan. 28-Feb. 19

ON SUSANNA! Varscona Theatre 10329-83 Ave (433-3399) • A Euro-style variety show with international glamour gal Susanna Patchouli and her special guest co-host • Tickets available at the door • Sat, Jan. 28 (11pm)

ON THE TOWN John L. Haar Theatre, 10045-155 St (420-1757) • Classic musical presented by MacEwan's Theatre Arts Program, choreography by Cindy Kerr • A tale of three American sailors with 24 hours leave looking for love, good times and enough memories to last the next six months at sea • Jan. 27-Feb. 4 • \$13 (adult)/\$11 (student/senior) Tue-Thu 8pm, Sun 2pm; \$20 (adult)/\$17 (student/senior) Fri Sat 8pm, Pay-What-You-Can Sat 2pm; Tuesdays Two-For-One

PLAY STRINDBERG Red Strap Art Market, 10305-97 St, 2nd Fl (420-1757) • By Friedrich Dürrenmatt, translated by James Kirkup, presented by Image Theatre • A dark comedy about Alice and Edgar who have been married and have hated each other a long time. They live on an isolated island, tormenting each other • Jan. 19-28 (8pm), Sun, Jan. 22 (2pm) • \$13 (Sun, Tue-Thu)/\$16 (Fri-Sat) at TIX on the Square, door

PLAYWRIGHTING FESTIVAL (492-7708) • **Black Dog Freehouse**, Whyte Ave; Darrin Hagen; Thu, Jan. 19 (7pm) • **Savoy**, 104 St, Whyte Ave; Mark Stubbings; Thu, Jan. 19 (7pm) • **Idylwyld Library**, 8310 88 Ave; Dana Rayment; Thu, Jan. 19 (7pm) • **Stanley A. Milner Library**, 7 Sir Winston Churchill Sq; Stephanie Benger; Thu, Jan. 19 (7pm) • **Westbury Theatre**, TransAlta Arts Barns; Aaron Adams, Fri, Jan. 20 (8pm); Paul Matwyuk, Sat, Jan. 21 (8pm) • Free

SISTERS, SUCH DEVOTED SISTERS Catalyst Theatre, 8529 Gateway Blvd (420.1757/431.1750) • A shocking and darkly humorous glimpse into the life of a Glaswegian drag queen written and performed by Russell Barr • Jan. 25-29 • \$21 (adult)/\$16 (student/senior) at TIX on the Square

10 DAYS OF MADNESS PLAYWRIGHTING FESTIVAL www.bookstore.ulberta.ca (492-7708) • 24-hour playwrighting competition featuring play workshops and presentations • Until Jan. 21

THEATRESPORTS Varscona Theatre, 10329-83 Ave (448-0695) • Rapid Fire Theatre weekly improv show every Friday at 11pm • \$10

EVENTS WEEKLY

Fax your free listings to 426-2889
or e-mail Glenys at
listings@vneweekly.com
Deadline is Friday at 3pm

CLUBS/LECTURES

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL Knox Metropolitan United Church, 83 Ave, 109 St (446-5461) • Monthly meeting • Tue, Jan. 24 (7pm)

BOREAL ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIVISM 7, 6328A-104 St; every Thu (6:30-8:30) • Organic Roots, 8225-122 St; every third Thu (6:30pm)

CATALYST SALONS Catalyst Theatre, 8529 Gateway Blvd (431-1750) • Talk about art, life and the creative process in an informal salon setting with Russell Barr and Darren Hagen • Fri, Jan. 27

CONVERSATION CAFÉ Unity of Edmonton Church, 13212-106 Ave • Meeting presented by Rev. Yvonne Racine • Every Tue (1-3pm)

EDMONTON NATURE CLUB Royal Alberta Museum, 427-8515 • Monthly meeting featuring *Controversies in Dinosaur Studies* by speaker Philip Currie • Jan. 20 (7pm)

FAVA'S MONTHLY WRITER'S CIRCLE Exhibition Suite (429-1671) • Meeting on the first Tue ea. month (7-9pm), to discuss, share and comment on work in progress, common challenges and to hear from special guests

FEDERAL ELECTION FORUMS • Arch Bishop Joseph MacNeil School, 2010 Leger Rd (471-4218) Jan. 19 (11:30am)

JEESUS THROUGH THE CENTURIES-HIS PLACE IN THE HISTORY OF CULTURE Star of the North Retreat Centre, 3431 Vital Ave, St. Albert (459-5511) • Lecture/discussion facilitated by David Goa • Jan. 19, 26, Feb. 16, 23, Mar. 16 (8pm) • \$89 (series)/\$20 (session) • Pre-register

MEDITATION 10502-70 Ave (633-6157) • Tranquility meditation, Tibetan tradition with Ani Lama Kunsang • am) • Free

OUR NORTH AMERICA: FROM TURTLE ISLAND TO THE SECURITY AND PROSPERITY PARTNERSHIP Tory Bdg, Basement, Rm 95 • New issues: Security, lecture featuring speakers Greg Albo and Janine Brodie • Jan. 26 (3:30-5pm)

REIKI CIRCLE StillPoint, 110, 10350-124 St (452-9388) • With Tim Dayna Boetzkes • Wed, Jan. 25 (7-9pm) • \$10 pre-register

ROMANCE WRITERS OF EDMONTON Grant McEwan, RM 5-238, www.romancewritersedmonton.com • First

and third Thu ea. Month (7-9:30pm)

SENIORS UNITED NOW Royal Canadian Legion, 6 Tache Street, St. Albert (449-1816) • Monthly meeting • Mon, Jan. 23 (1:30pm)

TOASTMASTERS Norwood Toastmasters Club, 11150-82 St (430-8774) • Learn public speaking and communication skills in an encouraging, supportive and friendly environment • Every Thu (8-10pm)

WASKAHEGAN TRAIL ASSOCIATION MacDonald's Capilano Mall, 55 St, 101 Ave (478-5622) • Free guided hike/ski, approx. 11 km at Gold Bar • Jan. 22

WOMEN'S HEALING CIRCLE Still Point, 110, 10350-124 St (452-9388) • With Marianne Peters • Jan. 24-Mar. 21 (7-9:30pm) • \$10 (evening)

WRITERS GUILD OF ALBERTA Upper Crust Café, 10909-86 Ave • Edmonton Member Night: Panel discussion event featuring Marty Chan and Don Hannah • Wed, Jan. 25 (7pm) • Free (WGA member), \$5 (non-member)

KARAOKE

AVENUE PIZZA 8519-112 St (432-0536) • Every Thu (9:30pm)

B-STREET 11818-111 Ave (414-0545) • Every Wed-Sun (9pm): with Brad Scott

BANKER'S PUB 16753-100 St (406-5440) • Every Fri (9pm-1am) • Every Sun (8pm-midnight): with Off-Key Entertainment

BLIND PIG PUB AND GRILL 32 St. Anne Street, St. Albert, 418-6332 • Every Thu • Every Wed: name that tune

CAMELOT SPORTS BAR 10231-95 St (425-4298) • Every Sun (8pm-12): Hosted by Jeannie

CEILI'S IRISH PUB 10338-109 St (426-5555) • Every Sat (9pm): Jameoke

DOYLE'S PUB 2619-151 Ave (473-1961) • Every Fri/Sat (9:30pm)

ECCO PUB 9605-66 Ave • Every Mon (9pm): with Sonia, Prosound Productions

FRANCO'S 14059 Victoria Trail (478-4636) • Every Thu/Sat (10pm-2:30am): Debra-Fae

GAS PUMP 10166-114 St (488-4841) • Every Tue/Wed (9pm)

HOLIDAY INN 4520-76 Ave • Every Thu (8:30pm): with Linda, Prosound Productions

JAMMERS PUB 11948-127 Ave (451-8779) • Every Mon (7-11pm): hosted by Peggy Sue

LAKEVIEW PUB 18, 9104-179 Ave • Every Sat (9pm-1am): with Off-Key Entertainment

MOJO'S Best Western Hotel, Fort Saskatchewan • Every Fri (9:30pm): with Sonia, Prosound Productions

PICARDS PUB 10725-104 Ave (428-4386) • Every Wed (8pm): with Christy, Mr. Entertainment

ROSLIE'S BAR AND GRILL • Downtown, 10604-101 St (423-3499) • every Mon-Sat (9pm); Sun (7pm): with Ruth • Highstreet, 10315-124 St (482-1600); daily (9:30pm) • Old Strathcona, 10475-80 Ave (439-7211); every Thu-Sat (9:30pm-1:30am): 99 St, 63 Ave; every Thu-Sat (9pm-1am); with Off-Key Entertainment

SANTANA'S • Every Wed (9pm-2am)

SPORTSWORLD INLINE AND ROLLER SKATING DISCO 13710-104 St (472-6336) • Every Tues, Fri-Sat (7pm-midnight), Sat-Sun (1-5pm)

SUNSET PIZZA 152, Stony Plain Rd • Every Wed-Sat (9pm-2am)

T. B'S PUB 62 St, Stony Plain Rd (443-2621) • Every Fri-Sat (9pm-2am): with Jeannie; games and prizes

TODAY'S 5224-86 St (465-6223) • Every Fri/Sat (9pm-1am)

WHISTLE STOP PUB 24 Ave, 132 St (451-5506) • Every Wed-Thu: with Jeannie

WINSTONS PUB 9016-132 Ave (457-4883) • Every Fri/Sat (9pm-1am)

WOODY'S 11723 Jasper Ave (488-6557) • Open Daily (noon) • Every Sat-Wed (7pm-midnight): with Annie and Tizzy

YESTERDAY'S 205 Carnegie Dr, St. Albert (459-0295) • Every Tue (9pm-1am): Off-Key Entertainment with Nicole

city • Second Wed ea month

HIV NETWORK OF EDMONTON SOCIETY 300, 11456-Jasper Ave (488-5742) or contact7@hivedmonton.com • Programs and support services for people affected and infected by HIV/AIDS and related illnesses. Counselling, referrals, support groups, harm reduction, education, advocacy and public awareness campaigns

INSIDE/OUT U of A Campus • Campus-based organization for lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans-identified and queer (LGBTQ) faculty, graduate student, academic, straight allies and support staff • Third Thu each month (fall/winter terms): Speakers Series. Contact Krits (krits@ualberta.ca)

LIVING POSITIVE 404, 10408-124 St, www.edmliving-positive.ca (1-877-975-9448/488-5768) • Providing confidential peer support to people living with HIV • Every Tue (7-9pm): Support group • Daily drop-in, peer counselling

MADELEINE SANAM FOUNDATION Faculté St. Jean, 8406 Marie-Anne Gaboury (91 St) Rm 3-18 (490-7332) • Program for HIV/AIDS prevention, treatment and harm reduction in French, English and other African languages • Every 3rd and 4th Sat (9am-5pm) • Free (member) \$10 (membership) • Pre-register

MAKING WAVES SWIMMING CLUB www.geocities.com/makingwaves_edm • Recreational and competitive swimming with coaching, beginners encouraged to participate. Socializing after practices • Every Tue and Thu

MEAN TALKING WITH PRIDE Pride Centre, 10010-109 St (488-3234) • Every Sun (7pm): A safe, supportive, confidential discussion group talking about all gay related issues, for men at any stage of coming out • Free • talkwithpride@hotmail.com

PRAG Pride Centre, 10010-109 St (462-5958) • Meetings every third Tuesday of the month at 7:30pm • Support/education for parents, families and friends of lesbians/gays/bisexuals/transgenders

PRISM BAR AND GRILL 10524-101 St, back entrance (990-0038) • Lesbian and gay bar/restaurant

THE ROOST 10345-104 St (426-3150) • Open Sun-Thu 8pm-3am, Fri-Sat 8pm-4am • Wed: Amateur strip with Weena Luv, Sticky Vicky, DJ Alvaro • Thu: Rotating shows: Sticky's open stage and the Weakest Link game second and last Thu with DJ Jazzy • Fri: Upstairs: Euro Blitz: New European music with DJ Outstakaw Downstairs: DJ Jazzy • Sat: Every Sat like new years: Upstairs: Monthly theme parties with DJ Jazzy; Downstairs: New music with DJ Dan and Mike • Long weekend Sundays: Betty Ford Hangover Clinic Show: Every long weekend with DJ Jazzy • Tue-Thu \$1 (member) \$4 (non-member); Fri-Sat \$4 (member) \$6 (non-member); Sun \$2

CATALYST THEATRE 8529 Gateway Blvd (420-1757/431-1750) • The play Sisters, Such Devoted Sisters, written and performed by Russell Barr, glimpses into the life of a Glaswegian drag queen • Jan. 25-29 • \$21 (adult) \$16 (student/senior) at TIX on the Square Theatre box office, TicketMaster

STEAMWORKS 11745 Jasper Ave (451-5554) • Steam baths open daily (24hrs)

WOODY'S 11723 Jasper Ave (488-6557) • Open Daily (noon) • Sat-Wed: Karaoke with Annie and Tizzy (7-12pm) • Tue, Sat-Sun: Pool tournaments

YOUTH UNDERSTANDING YOUTH Pride Centre

10010-109 St, www.members.shaw.ca/juy • Every Sat (7-9pm) • An adult facilitated social/support group for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgendered, and straight youth under the age of 25

SPECIAL EVENTS

ART AND MUZAK Bohemia Cyber Café, 110 St, Jasper Ave • Featuring GMCC art students, live bands, DJs and more • No minors • Thu, Jan. 26 (8pm) • No cover (donations to the foodbank)

BLACK HISTORY MONTH www.nbccedmonton.org (425-0319) • City Hall; opening ceremonies; Sat, Jan. 28 (2pm); free • **Bethel United Apostolic Church**, 9950-148 St; church service; Sun, Jan. 29 (11:30am); free • **Jubilee Auditorium**, 11455-87 Ave; NBCC gospel concert featuring Carlene Davis; 7pm; \$25 at TicketMaster • **Hellenic Canadian Community Hall**, 10450-116 St; Taste of Africa and Caribbean; Sat, Feb. 18; 2:30-11:30pm; \$2

BLUEBIRD NORTH TOUR: WHERE WRITERS SING AND TELL Royal Alberta Museum Theatre, 12845-102 Ave (438-6814) • Featuring Tom Wilson, Jimmy Rankin, Divine Brown, Wil with hosts Shan Ulrich and Lennie Gallant • Sun, Jan. 29 (7:30pm door, 8pm show) • \$18 (adv) \$22 (door) at TIX on the Square, Myhr's Music, and Acoustic Music Shop

ICE ON WHYTE FESTIVAL www.iceonwhyte.ca • McIntyre Park, 83 Ave, 104 St; ice sculpting competition and show • Park on 85 Ave, 104 St; Family Ice Adventures • Jan. 19-29 (10am-10pm) • Donation

THE INDIGO EVOLUTION StillPoint, 110, 10350-124 St (452-9388) • Documentary by James Twyman hosted by Dayna Tim Boetzkes • Jan. 27-29 (Fri 1pm, 6pm, 8pm; Sat 10am, 1pm, 4pm, 7pm, 9pm; Sun 1pm, 6pm, 8pm, 10pm) • \$12

INTERNATIONAL WEEK 2006 Various Locations, University of Alberta Campus, www.international.ualberta.ca • Featuring a lecture by Stephen Lewis, other lectures, panels, workshops, films, live music, a fair trade fair, and more on the theme More Than Words: Realizing Human Rights • Jan. 30-Feb. 3

ISMAILI STUDENTS ASSOCIATION'S HEAD SHAVE FOR CANCER HUB Mall, U of A (993-6474) • Jan. 20 (12-3pm)

POLAR BEAR DINNER AND AUCTION Old Timer's Cabin, 9430 99 St, Scona Rd (414-6300) • Winter-themed dinner and a live and silent auction, a fundraiser in support of the Canadian Mental Health Association • Fri, Jan. 27 (6pm-midnight) • \$55

THE SHANGHAI CIRCUS Arden Theatre, 5 St. Anne Street, St. Albert (459-1542) • Featuring the incredible acrobats of China • Sat, Jan. 21 (2 and 7pm) • \$30 (adult) \$25 (child 12 and under/senior) at the Arden Theatre box office, TicketMaster

STILL WE RIDE Earth's General Store, 10832 Whyte Ave (439-8725) • Documentary of the New York Critical Mass Ride where over 400 cyclists were arrested. This follows the monthly Critical Mass ride that starts at 5:30pm from City Hall and ends at Gazebo Park • Fri, Jan. 27 (6:30pm) • Free

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artist to artist

The Alberta Society of Artists: Call for Membership. Submission deadline is Mar. 1, 2006, (780) 426-0072 www.artists-society.ab.ca

Romantic Short Story Contest Deadline Feb 14. Info: www.romancewritersedmonton.com Contact: rwe@romancewritersedmonton.com

If the HAT fits call for submissions, open to Alberta artists. Deadline: Mar. 15, 2006. For info ph 461-9028, e-mail: daNielle@damselflydesign.ca

Carnival of Shrieking Youth Emerging Artists Festival, seeking screen writers, production crew and film directors for the COSY film festival. Ph 499-1271 or cosyfestival@gmail.com before Jan. 31.

Film and Theatre Auditions Feb. 3-5 for the 14th Annual Carnival Of Shrieking Youth Emerging Artists Festival. Ages 11-25! Ph 499-1271 or cosyfestival@gmail.com

Actors and actresses ages 18-45 needed for war film. No experience necessary. Ph 719-2743 for audition.

HIV/AIDS Educational Video/Film Project - Casting Call: The Madeline Sanam Foundation, looking for actors/actresses, extras, technicians, director of photography, sound recorder, production assistants, editor, music composer, from the Afro-Canadian community to participate in an HIV/AIDS prevention video/film project. Ph: 490-7332.

Sick and Disturbing. Bloody and Demented. I want to photograph your artwork and multimedia pieces. Trade for services or free, 780-914-8747.

Printmaking workshops: • Intro to silkscreen; Thurs, 6-9pm, Jan. 26-Feb. 23 • Intro to woodcut; Weds, 6-9pm; Feb. 1-Mar. 1 • Intro to Etching; Sats, 1-4pm; Feb. 4-Mar. 11. Ph 423-1492, www.snapartists.com

Fringe: Call for festival poster. Deadline Jan. 31 (5pm). Ph 448-9000, www.fringetheatreadventures.ca

Focus on Fibre Art Association is seeking entries for juried competition/show of fibre art. Deadline: Feb. 10, 2006. Ph Shirley 469-1783.

Edmonton Weavers' Guild spring classes at the Guild Studios, 10440-108 Ave. Ph 425-1152.

Printmaking workshops at SNAP Gallery and Printshop in Etching and Silkscreen. Starting soon. Call 423-1492 to register, info.

Call to Enter: ArtsHub Studio Gallery features guest artists, incl: Proposal; 10 slides/photos; CV; Artist statement. For info Ph Tim 423-2966.

Art classes at Harcourt House: Figurative Sculpture, Drawing and Painting. Ph 426-4180

The Edmonton Learning Community need good stories from people with developmental disabilities. Info: Wendy Hollo, e-mail: whollo@telus.net, Ph 915-9037.

musicians

BLUEBIRD NORTH TOUR: WHERE WRITERS SING AND TELL: Sun, Jan. 29, Royal Alberta Museum Theatre, 12845-102 Ave; (780) 438-6814.

Bass player avail. for country/rock style band. Serious enquiries only. (780) 722-9907.

Wanted: fiddle/accordion/tin whistle player to join our Celtic group. Ph Marie at 435-6795.

Guitarist relentlessly looking for/join band 18-25, part time gig. Infl: Misfits, G'n'R, Smalls, Hooker, Rancid. Ph: 440-4048.

Band seeking frontman, infl: Atrayo, Bleed the Dram, Alexis on Fire. Ryan 918-5992.

All Ages open stage, Saturday 2-6 @ The Druid Downtown. Teens, kids, Families welcome.

Golden Gate Gospel, Coffee House every Sat, 7pm, musicians and singers wanted. Ph 447-4357.

Vocalist/Rhythm looking to form a soft rock band infl, OLP, Coldplay, MGB, looking for talented/passionate players. David 490-9220.

Bands wanted for recording, collaboration and management. Ph Steve 1-403-578-4371.

Need classical/flamenco guitarist bassist, ethnic instrumentalist for serious orig. gypsy/eastern project. Alin 237-2546.

Vocalist/Rhythm looking to form a soft rock band infl, OLP, Coldplay, MGB, looking for talented/passionate players. David 490-9220.

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BY ANDREA NEMERSON

Ball One

Dear Andrea:

I fantasize about my girlfriend humiliating and degrading me and making me suck her toes, but I am afraid to tell her about it because I don't want to frighten her. How can I introduce my humiliation fantasies to her? I really want to serve, obey and worship her!

Love, Toe-Sucker

Dear Sucker:

I want this to work for you, I truly do, but you want her to abuse you even though you're afraid she's too delicate a flower even to entertain such a concept? You do see the problem here, don't you?

It's possible that at the very moment you are envisioning yourself as her slavering slave she is thinking how much fun it would be to hang you from the ceiling by your nipples, and all you have to do is compare notes and get started. Possible, but honestly, how likely? It's equally improbable that she spends her time musing upon how deeply not interested she is in dominating you. I'm guessing such a thing has never crossed her mind, so this is pretty much all on you. There's no guaranteed successful right way to proceed, but, as with most attempts to initiate change in a relationship, there are plenty of wrong ones.

Very, very wrong: go out and spend a good deal of money on a leather corset, thigh-high boots, and a collection of whips and clamps which will cause damage and ill-will if wielded inexpertly, and hand them over to her with a look of eager, waggy-tailed expectation. Bad dog, very bad.

Still wrong: skip the pricey gear but go scrambling off the bed and onto your knees, trying her suck her toes and call her "Mistress" (with your mouth full!) all at once without preamble. She will burst out laughing or into tears, or just get up quietly and look for her underwear, then claim to be terribly busy the next time you call but "we really should get together soon."

Better: urge her to hold your wrists down or otherwise show a tiny bit of aggression the next time you're fooling around and the mood is comfortable and playful. If she complies and seems to enjoy herself you have your post-coital conversation-opener. If she just

looks at you funny, well, you can and probably should still talk about it but don't get your hopes up.

There are many topish/bottomy games available to the complete S&M beginner or those for whom a little kink is quite enough, thank you. If she's happy telling you what to do and seems game for more you could bring home a book or two (Easton and Liszt's *The Topping Book* is pretty not-scary, and they wrote one for you as well, of course). But if you bring any of this up and she does indeed seem instantly spooked or disgusted you're just going to have to suck it up. Submit to her will, as it were.

Love, Andrea

Dear Andrea:

I am puzzled by my husband's request for me to grab his balls and squeeze and pull down on them. My problem is, he's in obvious pain, but when I do it softly he insists on me doing it harder. Is he unique or are there other guys who enjoy this pain?

Love, Ballgames

Dear Games:

Hahahahaha! Excuse me, please. No, not unique. Not by a long shot and a kick in the balls, no indeed. Your husband is in good company and if you agree to administer the requested rough treatment, so are you.

The last time I answered one of these questions—ball kicking, not ball-yanking, but bear with me—I mentioned that my dominatrix friend and her dominatrix friends all report that men who call for a ball-kicking never show up for their appointments, so while the ladies are willing to do it they are not willing to waste their time booking it. I then heard from yet another domme I know in real life (no, I never do tell my parents that much about my life), who says, *au contraire*, her ball-kickees always show up and pay very well, thanks. I have no idea where I'm going with all this, by the way. I just thought it was interesting.

Okay, more seriously: women do tend to underestimate the amount of—let's call it "sensation"—that men are willing and indeed eager to receive. Teenage girls, for instance, usually start off petting the penis like a puppy until the exasperated owner finally takes her hand and demonstrates that you can pet that puppy *really hard*. The balls are a somewhat different animal in that you really can hurt them, even permanently, with too eager a blow, and twisting is never advisable. A good, hard tug, slow and controlled, however, is unlikely to damage anything as long as you're using your hands and not, say, tying him off to a tractor. If he still insists he wants it harder, you can take him at his word.

Love, Andrea

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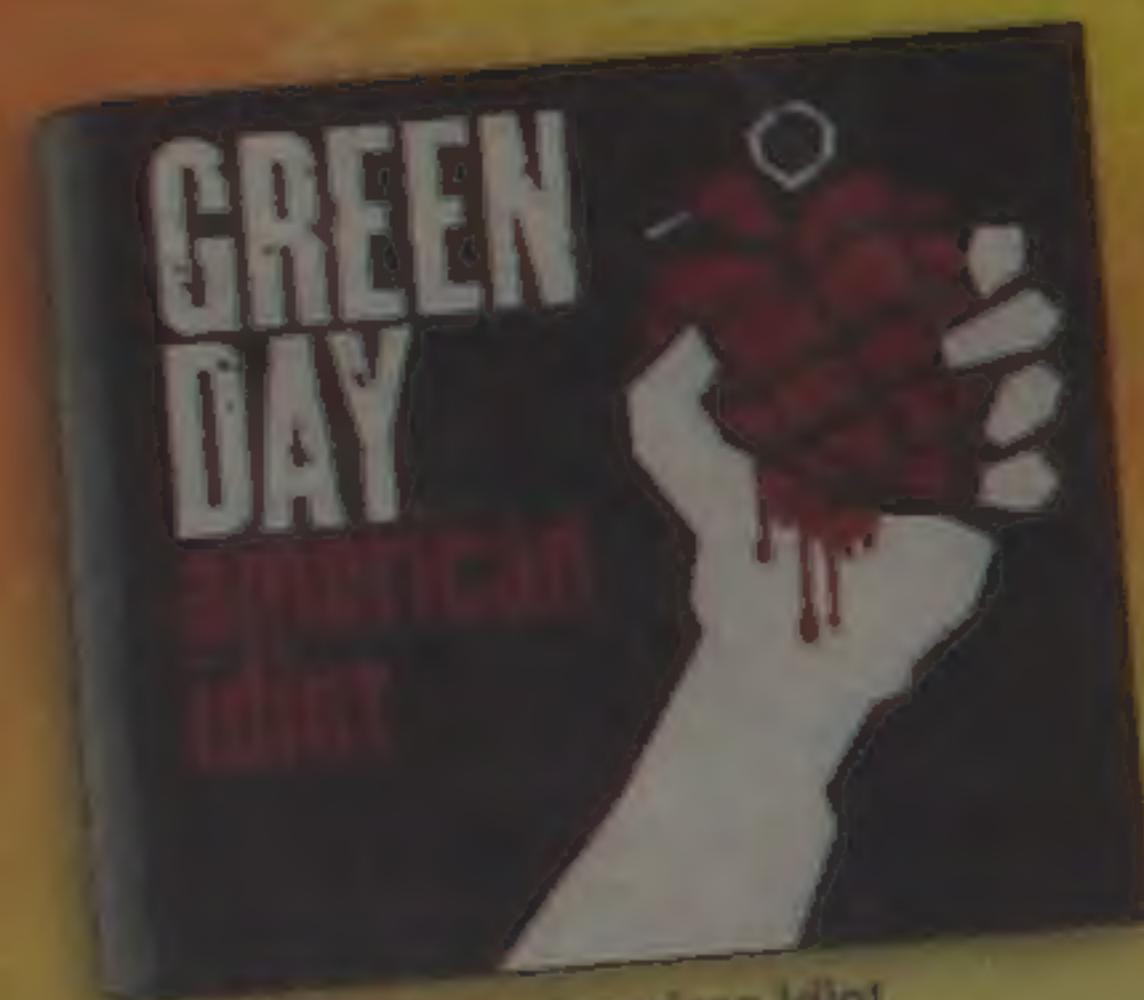
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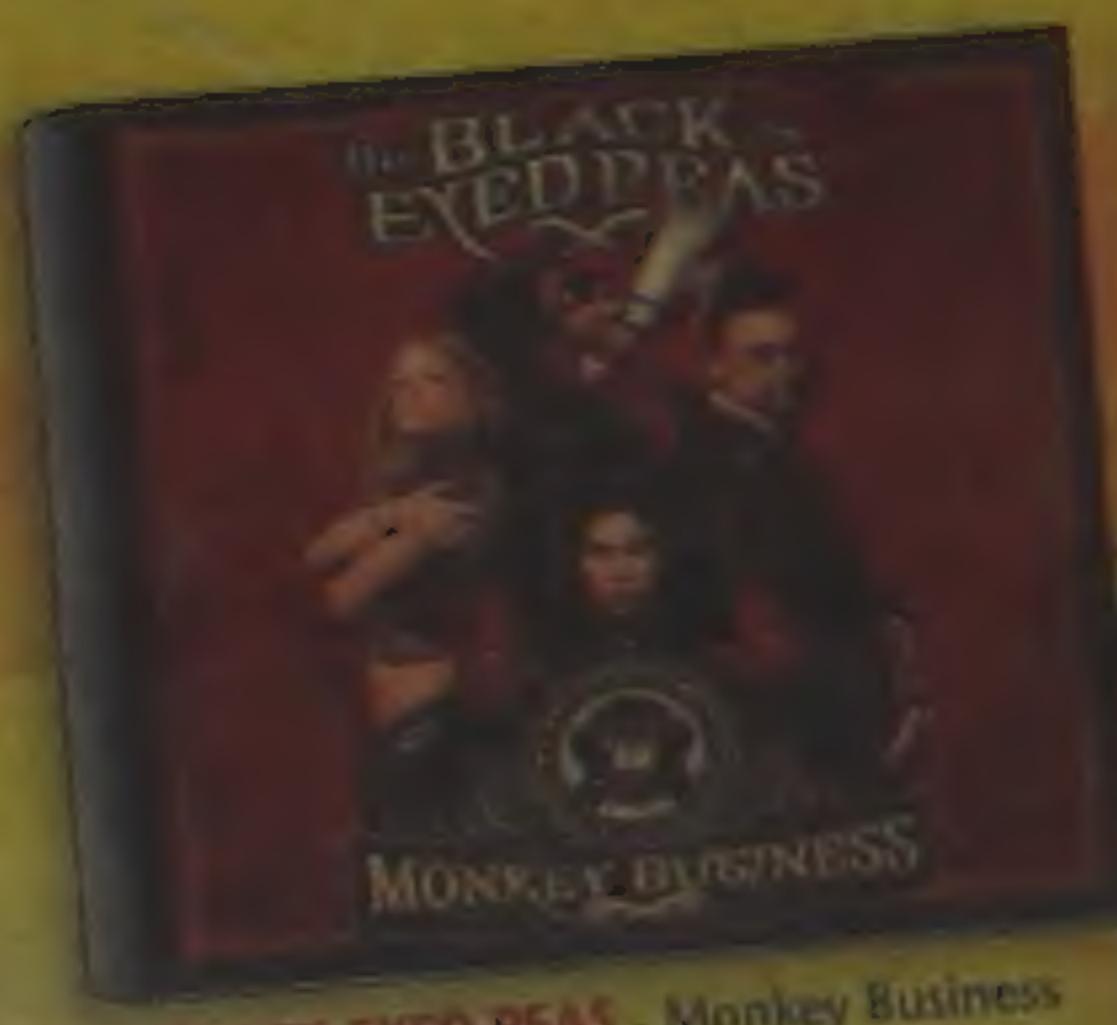
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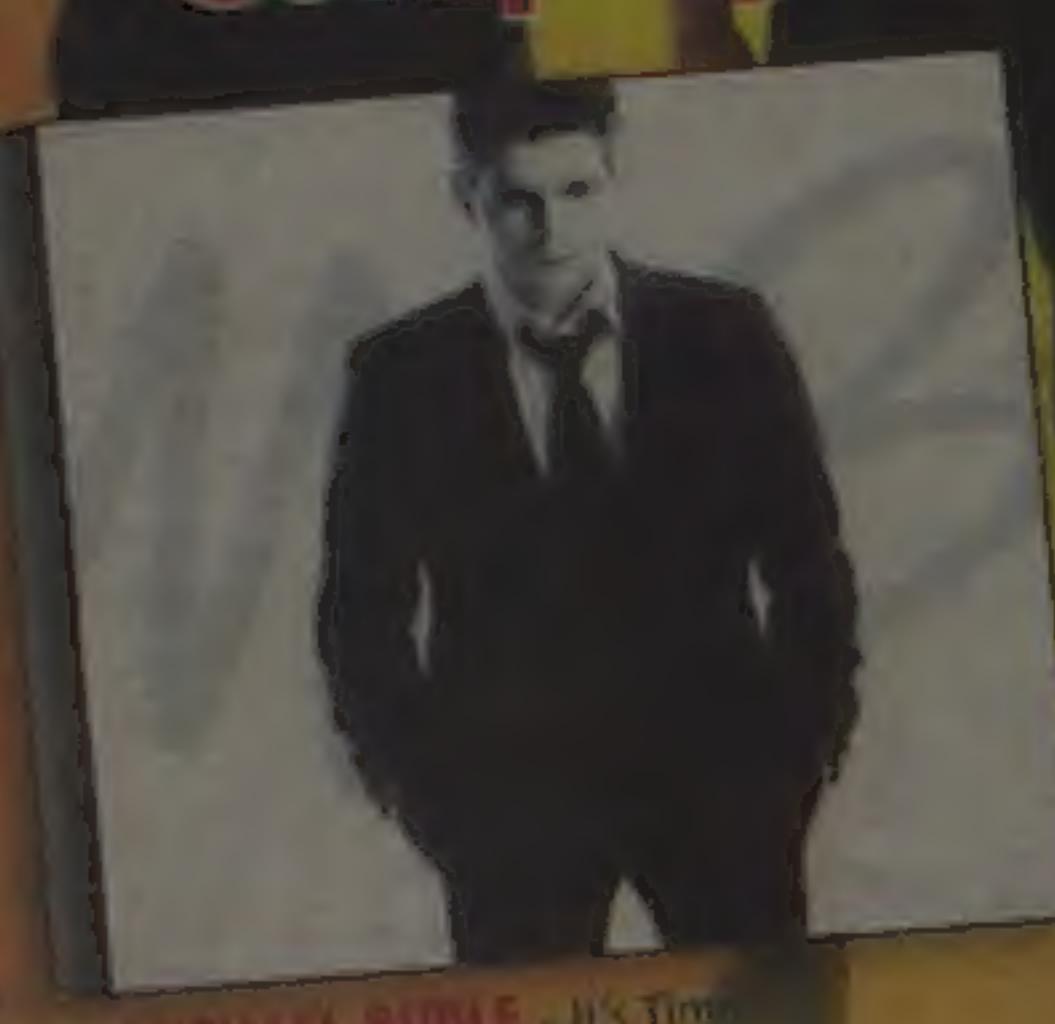
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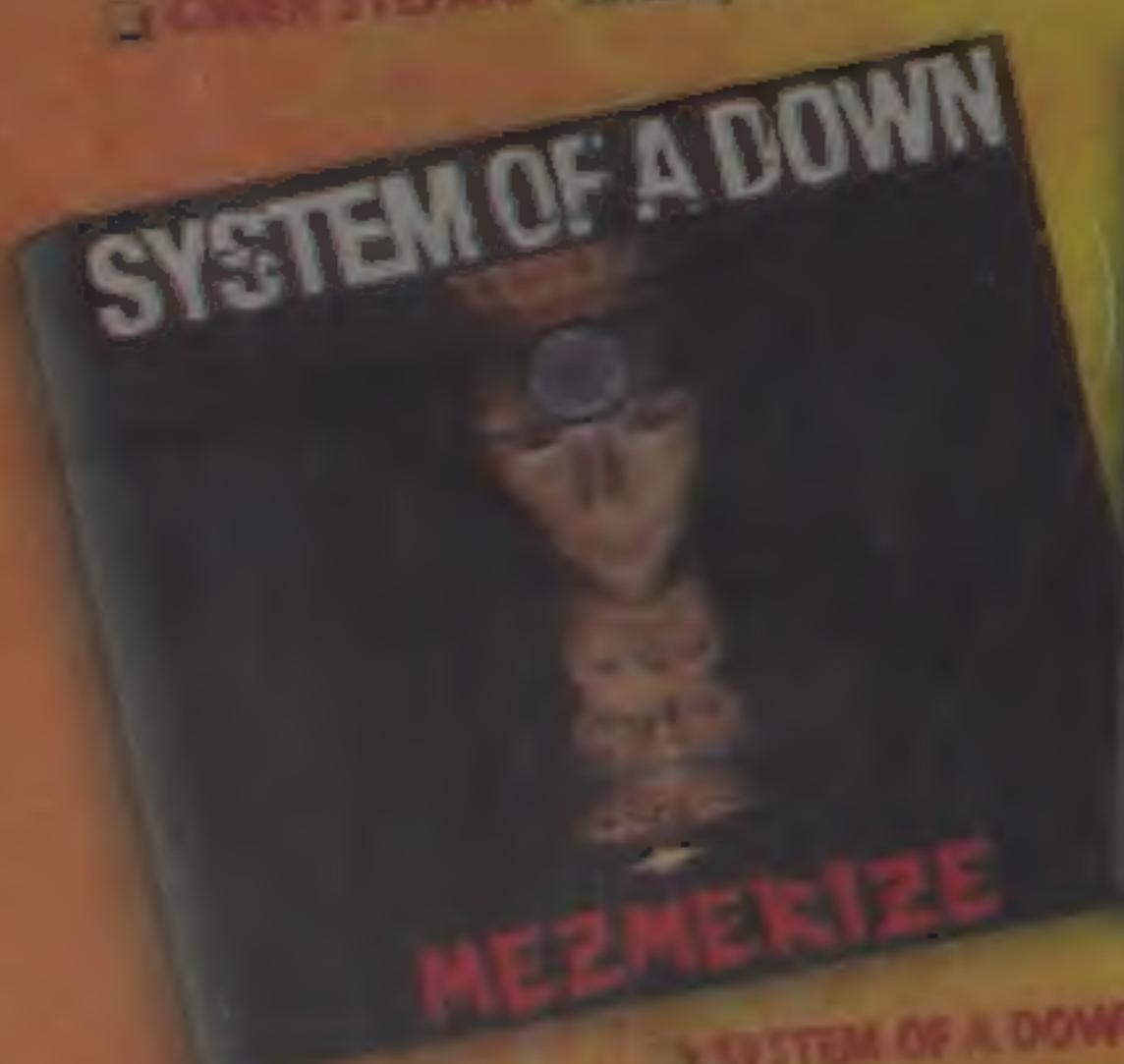
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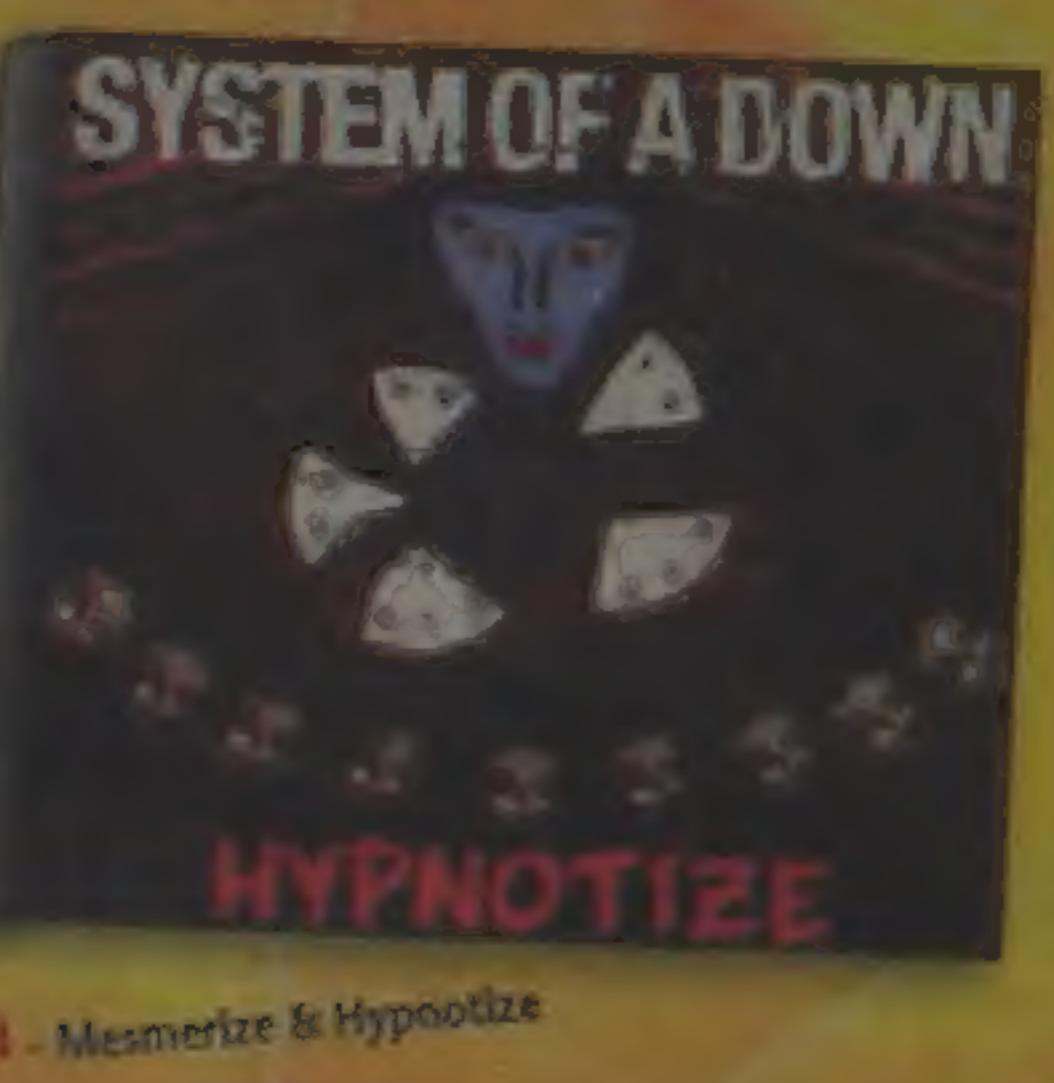
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